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*The complete poetical  
works of William Wordsworth*

William Wordsworth, John Morley



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THE  
COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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*John F. Kennedy Library*

THE  
COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
JOHN MORLEY

London  
MACMILLAN AND CO.  
AND NEW YORK  
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A LIST OF WORDSWORTH'S POEMS ARRANGED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER,  
AS FAR AS CAN BE DETERMINED FROM ACCESSIBLE DATA.<sup>1</sup>

<i>Com- posed.</i>	<i>First Published.</i>	1785 to 1797	PAGE
1785	1850	Written as a School Exercise at Hawkshead, anno ætatis 14 . And has the Sun his flaming chariot driven.	1
1786	1815	Extract from the Conclusion of a Poem composed in anticipation of leaving School . . . . . Dear native regions, I foretell.	2
1786 (probably)	1807	Written in very Early Youth . . . . . Calm is all nature as a resting wheel.	3
1787-89	1793	An Evening Walk. Addressed to a Young Lady . . . . Far from my dearest Friend, 'tis mine to rove.	3
1789	1798	Lines written while sailing in a Boat at Evening . . . . How richly glows the waters' breast.	9
1789	1798	Remembrance of Collins, composed upon the Thames near Richmond . . . . . Glide gently, thus for ever glide.	10
1793	1793	Descriptive Sketches taken during a Pedestrian Tour among the Alps . . . . . Were there, below, a spot of holy ground.	10
1793-94	1842	Guilt and Sorrow ; or, Incidents upon Salisbury Plain . . . [One-third of this poem was published under the title of " <i>The Female Vagrant</i> " in 1798.] A Traveller on the skirt of Sarum's Plain.	21
1795	1798	Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands near the Lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate part of the Shore, commanding a beautiful Prospect . . . . . Nay, Traveller ! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands.	33
1795-96	1842	The Borderers. A Tragedy . . . . . The troop will be impatient : let us hie.	34
1797	1800	The Reverie of Poor Susan . . . . . At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears.	72

<sup>1</sup> In every instance of a Poem published during Wordsworth's lifetime the title is that which he adopted in his final edition. The first line of the Poem follows in smaller print. When no title was given—as in the case of many of the Sonnets, etc.—the first line alone is printed.



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1798	1798	Her eyes are Wild . . . . . Her eyes are wild, her head is bare.	81
1798	1798	Simon Lee, the old Huntsman; with an incident in which he was concerned . . . . . In the sweet shire of Cardigan.	82
1798	1798	Lines written in Early Spring . . . . . I heard a thousand blended notes.	83
1798	1798	To my Sister . . . . . It is the first mild day of March.	84
1798	1800	A whirl-blast from behind the hill . . . . .	84
1798	1798	Expostulation and Reply . . . . . "Why, William, on that old grey stone.	85
1798	1798	The Tables Turned. An evening Scene, on the same Subject . . . . . Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books.	85
1798	1798	The Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman . . . . . Before I see another day.	85
1798	1798	The Last of the Flock . . . . . In distant countries have I been.	87
1798	1798	The Idiot Boy . . . . . 'Tis eight o'clock,—a clear March night	88
1798	1798	Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey, on revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798 . . . . . Five years have past; five summers, with the length.	93
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1799	1800	She dwelt among the untrodden ways . . . . .	114
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1799	1800	Three years she grew in sun and shower . . . . .	115
1799	1800	A slumber did my spirit seal . . . . .	115
1799	1800	A Poet's Epitaph . . . . . Art thou a Statist in the van.	115
1799	1845	Address to the Scholars of the Village School of ——— . . . . . I come, ye little noisy Crew.	116
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*[Miss Wordsworth's MS. Journal enables us to fix the dates of the composition of the Poems of 1802 more accurately than those of any other year, and also to correct several of the dates given by the Poet himself to Miss Fenwick in 1845.]*

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1805	1807	Elegiac Stanzas, suggested by a Picture of Peele Castle in a Storm, painted by Sir George Beaumont . . . . . I was thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile !	217
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## INTRODUCTION

THE poet whose works are contained in the present volume was born in the little town of Cockermouth, in Cumberland, on April 7, 1770. He died at Rydal Mount in the neighbouring county of Westmoreland, on April 23, 1850. In this long span of mortal years, events of vast and enduring moment shook the world. A handful of scattered and dependent colonies in the northern continent of America made themselves into one of the most powerful and beneficent of states. The ancient monarchy of France, and all the old ordering of which the monarchy had been the keystone, was overthrown, and it was not until after many a violent shock of arms, after terrible slaughter of men, after strange diplomatic combinations, after many social convulsions, after many portentous mutations of Empire, that Europe once more settled down for a season into established order and system. In England almost alone, after the loss of her great possessions across the Atlantic Ocean, the fabric of the State stood fast and firm. Yet here, too, in these eighty years, an old order slowly gave place to new. The restoration of peace, after a war conducted with extraordinary tenacity and fortitude, led to a still more wonderful display of ingenuity, industry, and enterprise, in the more fruitful field of commerce and of manufactures. Wealth, in spite of occasional vicissitudes, increased with amazing rapidity. The population of England and Wales grew from being seven and a half millions in 1770, to nearly eighteen millions in 1850. Political power was partially transferred from a territorial aristocracy to the middle and trading classes. Laws were made at once more equal and more humane. During all the tumult of the great war which for so many years bathed Europe in fire, through all the throes and agitations in which peace brought forth the new time, Wordsworth for half a century (1799-1850) dwelt sequestered in unbroken composure and steadfastness in his chosen home amid the mountains and lakes of his native region, working out his own ideal of the poet's high office.

The interpretation of life in books and the development of imagination underwent changes of its own. Most of the great lights of the eighteenth century were still burning, though burning low, when Wordsworth came into the world. Pope, indeed, had been dead for six and twenty years, and all the rest of the Queen Anne men had gone. But Gray only died in 1771, and Goldsmith in 1774. Ten years later Johnson's pious and manly heart ceased to beat. Voltaire and Rousseau, those two diverse oracles of their age, both died in 1778. Hume had passed away two years before. Cowper was forty years older than Wordsworth, but Cowper's most delightful work was not produced until 1783. Crabbe, who anticipated Wordsworth's choice of themes from rural life, while treating them with a sterner realism, was virtually his contemporary, having been born in 1754, and dying in 1832. The two great names of his own date were Scott and Coleridge, the first born in 1771,

and the second a year afterwards. Then a generation later came another new and illustrious group. Byron was born in 1788, Shelley in 1792, and Keats in 1795. Wordsworth was destined to see one more orb of the first purity and brilliance rise to its place in the poetic firmament. Tennyson's earliest volume of poems was published in 1830, and *In Memoriam*, one of his two masterpieces, in 1850. Any one who realises for how much these famous names will always stand in the history of human genius, may measure the great transition that Wordsworth's eighty years witnessed in some of men's deepest feelings about art and life and "the speaking face of earth and heaven."

Here, too, Wordsworth stood isolated and apart. "Scott and Southey were valued friends, but he thought little of Scott's poetry, and less of Southey's. Byron and Shelley he seems scarcely to have read; and he failed altogether to appreciate Keats." (*Myers*.) Of Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* he said, "There is something in the madness of this man which interests me more than the sanity of Lord Byron and Walter Scott." Coleridge was the only man of the shining company with whom he ever had any real intimacy of mind, for whom he ever nourished real deference and admiration, as one "unrelentingly possessed by thirst of greatness, love, and beauty," and in whose intellectual power, as the noble lines in the Sixth Book of the *Prelude* so gorgeously attest, he took the passionate interest of a man at once master, disciple, and friend. It is true to say, as Emerson says, that Wordsworth's genius was the great exceptional fact of the literature of his period; but he had no teachers nor inspirers save nature and solitude.

Wordsworth was the son of a solicitor, and all his early circumstances were homely, unpretentious, and rather straitened. His mother died when he was eight years old, and when his father followed her five years later, two of his uncles provided means for continuing at Cambridge the education which had been begun in the rural grammar school of Hawkshead. It was in 1787 that he went up to St. John's College. He took his Bachelor's degree at the beginning of 1791, and there his connection with the university ended.

For some years after leaving Cambridge, Wordsworth let himself drift. He did not feel good enough for the Church; he shrank from the law; fancying that he had talents for command, he thought of being a soldier. Meanwhile, he passed a short time desultorily in London. Towards the end of 1791, through Paris, he passed on to Orleans and Blois, where he made some friends and spent most of a year. He returned to Paris in October 1792. France was no longer standing on the top of golden hours. The September massacres filled the sky with a lurid flame. Wordsworth still retained his ardent faith in the Revolution, and was even ready, though no better than "a landsman on the deck of a ship struggling with a hideous storm," to make common cause with the Girondists. But the prudence of friends at home forced him back to England before the beginning of the terrible year of '93. With his return closed that first survey of its inheritance, which most serious souls are wont to make in the fervid prime of early manhood.

It would be idle to attempt any commentary on the bare facts that we have just recapitulated; for Wordsworth himself has clothed them with their full force and meaning in the *Prelude*. This record of the growth of a poet's mind, told by the poet himself with all the sincerity of which he was capable, is never likely to be popular. Of that, as of so much more of his poetry, we must say that, as a whole, it has not the musical, harmonious, sympathetic quality which seizes us in even the prose of such a book as Rousseau's *Confessions*. Macaulay thought the *Prelude* a

poorer and more tiresome *Excursion*, with the old flimsy philosophy about the effect of scenery on the mind, the old crazy mystical metaphysics, and the endless wildernesses of twaddle; still he admits that there are some fine descriptions and energetic declamations. All Macaulay's tastes and habits of mind made him a poor judge of such a poet as Wordsworth. He valued spirit, energy, pomp, stateliness of form and diction, and actually thought Dryden's fine lines about to-morrow being falser than the former day, as fine as any eight lines in Lucretius. But his words truly express the effect of the *Prelude* on more vulgar minds than his own. George Eliot, on the other hand, who had the inward eye that was not among Macaulay's gifts, found the *Prelude* full of material for a daily liturgy, and it is easy to imagine how she lingered as she did, over such a thought as this—

"There is  
One great society alone on earth :  
The noble Living and the noble Dead."

There is, too, as may be found imbedded even in Wordsworth's dullest work, many a line of the truest poetical quality, such as that on Newton's statue in the silent Chapel of Trinity College—

"The marble index of a mind for ever  
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought alone."

Apart, however, from beautiful lines like this, and from many noble passages of high reflection set to sonorous verse, this remarkable poem is in its whole effect unique in impressive power, as a picture of the advance of an elect and serious spirit from childhood and school-time, through the ordeal of adolescence, through close contact with stirring and enormous events, to the stage when it has found the sources of its strength, and is fully and finally prepared to put its temper to the proof.

The three Books that describe the poet's residence in France have a special and a striking value of their own. Their presentation of the phases of good men's minds as the successive scenes of the Revolution unfolded themselves, has real historic interest. More than this, it is an abiding lesson to brave men how to bear themselves in hours of public stress. It portrays exactly that mixture of persevering faith and hope with firm and reasoned judgment, with which I like to think that Turgot, if he had lived, would have confronted the workings of the Revolutionary power. Great masters in many kinds have been inspired by the French Revolution. Human genius might seem to have exhausted itself in the burning political passion of Burke, in the glowing melodrama of fire and tears of Carlyle, Michelet, Hugo; but the ninth, tenth, and eleventh Books of the *Prelude*, by their strenuous simplicity, their deep truthfulness, their slowfooted and inexorable transition from ardent hope to dark imaginations, sense of woes to come, sorrow for human kind, and pain of heart, breathe the very spirit of the great catastrophe. There is none of the ephemeral glow of the political exhortation, none of the tiresome falsity of the dithyramb in history. Wordsworth might well wish that some dramatic tale, endued with livelier shapes and flinging out less guarded words, might set forth the lessons of his experience. The material was fitting. The story of these three Books has something of the severity, the self-control, the inexorable necessity of classic tragedy, and like classic tragedy it has a noble end. The dregs and sour sediment that reaction from exaggerated hope is so apt to stir in poor natures, had no place here. The French Revolution made the one crisis in Wordsworth's

mental history, the one heavy assault on his continence of soul, and when he emerged from it all his greatness remained to him. After a long spell of depression, bewilderment, mortification, and sore disappointment, the old faith in new shapes was given back.

"Nature's self,  
By all varieties of human love  
Assisted, led me back through opening day  
To those sweet counsels between head and heart  
Whence grew that genuine knowledge, fraught with peace,  
Which, through the later sinkings of this cause,  
Hath still upheld me and upholds me now."

It was six years after his return from France before Wordsworth finally settled down in the scenes with which his name and the power of his genius were to be forever associated. During this interval it was that two great sources of personal influence were opened to him. He entered upon that close and beloved companionship with his sister, which remained unbroken to the end of their days; and he first made the acquaintance of Coleridge. The character of Dorothy Wordsworth has long taken its place in the gallery of admirable and devoted women who have inspired the work and the thoughts of great men. "She is a woman, indeed," said Coleridge, "in mind, I mean, and heart; for her person is such that if you expected to see a pretty woman, you would think her rather ordinary; if you expected to see an ordinary woman, you would think her pretty." To the solidity, sense, and strong intelligence of the Wordsworth stock, she added a grace, a warmth, and liveliness peculiarly her own. Her nature shines transparent in her letters, her truly admirable journal, and in every report that we have of her. Wordsworth's own feelings for her, and his sense of the debt that he owed to her faithful affection and eager mind, he has placed on lasting record.

The intimacy with Coleridge was, as has been said, Wordsworth's one strong friendship, and must be counted among the highest examples of that generous relation between great writers. Unlike in the quality of their genius, and unlike in force of character and the fortunes of life, they remained bound to one another by sympathies that neither time nor harsh trial ever extinguished. Coleridge had left Cambridge in 1794, had married, had started various unsuccessful projects for combining the improvement of mankind with the earning of an income, and was now settled in a small cottage at Nether Stowey in Somersetshire, with an acre and a half of land, from which he hoped to raise corn and vegetables enough to support himself and his wife, as well as to feed a couple of pigs on the refuse. Wordsworth and his sister were settled at Racedown, near Crewkerne, in Dorsetshire. In 1797 they moved to Alfoxden in Somersetshire, their principal inducement to the change being Coleridge's society. The friendship bore fruit in the production of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, mainly the work of Wordsworth, but containing no less notable a contribution from Coleridge than the *Ancient Mariner*. The two poets only received thirty guineas for their work, and the publisher lost his money. The taste of the country was not yet ripe for Wordsworth's poetic experiment.

Immediately after the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*, the two Wordsworths and Coleridge started from Yarmouth for Hamburg. Coleridge's account in *Satyrane's Letters*, published in the *Biographia Literaria*, of the voyage and of the conversations between the two English poets and Klopstock, is worth turning

to. The pastor told them that Klopstock was the German Milton. "A very German Milton indeed," they thought. The Wordsworths remained for four wintry months at Goslar in Saxony, while Coleridge went on to Ratzeburg, Göttingen, and other places, mastering German, and "delving in the unwholesome quicksilver mines of metaphysic depths." Wordsworth made little way with the language, but worked diligently at his own verse.

When they came back to England, Wordsworth and his sister found their hearts turning with irresistible attraction to their own familiar countryside. They at last made their way to Grasmere. The opening book of the *Recluse*, which is published for the first time in the present volume, describes in fine verse the emotions and the scene. The face of this delicious vale is not quite what it was when

" Cottages of mountain stone  
Clustered like stars some few, but single most,  
And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,  
Or glancing at each other cheerful looks  
Like separated stars with clouds between."

But it is foolish to let ourselves be fretted by the villa, the hotel, and the tourist. We may well be above all this in a scene that is haunted by a great poetic shade. The substantial features and elements of beauty still remain, the crags and woody steepes, the lake, "its one green island and its winding shores; the multitude of little rocky hills." Wordsworth was not the first poet to feel its fascination. Gray visited the Lakes in the autumn of 1769, and coming into the vale of Grasmere from the north-west, declared it to be one of the sweetest landscapes that art ever attempted to imitate, an unsuspected paradise of peace and rusticity. We cannot indeed compare the little crystal mere, set like a gem in the verdant circle of the hills, with the grandeur and glory of Lucerne, or the radiant gladness and expanse of Como: yet it has an inspiration of its own, to delight, to soothe, to fortify, and to refresh.

" What want we? have we not perpetual streams,  
Warm woods, and sunny hills, and fresh green fields,  
And mountains not less green, and flocks and herds,  
And thickets full of songsters, and the voice  
Of lordly birds, an unexpected sound  
Heard now and then from morn to latest eve,  
Admonishing the man who walks below  
Of solitude and silence in the sky.  
These have we, and a thousand nooks of earth  
Have also these, but nowhere else is found,  
Nowhere (or is it fancy?) can be found  
The one sensation that is here; . . .

'tis the sense  
Of majesty, and beauty, and repose,  
A blended holiness of earth and sky,  
Something that makes this individual spot,  
This small abiding-place of many men,  
A termination, and a last retreat,  
A centre, come from wheresoe'er you will,  
A whole without dependence or defect,  
Made for itself, and happy in itself,  
Perfect contentment, Unity entire."



In the Grasmere vale Wordsworth lived for half a century, first in a little cottage at the northern corner of the lake, and then (1813) in a more commodious house at Rydal Mount at the southern end, on the road to Ambleside. In 1802 he married Mary Hutchinson, of Penrith, and this completed the circle of his felicity. Mary, he once said, was to his ear the most musical and most truly English in sound of all the names we have. The name was of harmonious omen. The two beautiful sonnets that he wrote on his wife's portrait long years after, when "morning into noon had passed, noon into eve," show how much her large heart and humble mind had done for the blessedness of his home.

Their life was almost more simple than that of the dalesmen their neighbours. "It is my opinion," ran one of his oracular sayings to Sir George Beaumont, "that a man of letters, and indeed all public men of every pursuit, should be severely frugal." Means were found for supporting the modest home out of two or three small windfalls bequeathed by friends or relatives, and by the time that children had begun to come, Wordsworth was raised to affluence by obtaining the post of distributor of stamps for Westmoreland and part of Cumberland. His life was happily devoid of striking external incident. Its essential part lay in meditation and composition.

He was surrounded by friends. Southey had made a home for himself and his beloved library a few miles over the hills at Keswick. De Quincey, with his clever brains and shallow character, took up his abode in the cottage which Wordsworth had first lived in at Grasmere. Coleridge, born the most golden genius of them all, came to and fro in those fruitless unhappy wanderings which consumed a life that once promised to be so rich in blessing and in glory. In later years Dr. Arnold built a house at Fox How, attracted by the Wordsworths and the scenery; and other lesser lights came into the neighbourhood. "Our intercourse with the Wordsworths," Arnold wrote on the occasion of his first visit in 1832, "was one of the brightest spots of all; nothing could exceed their friendliness, and my almost daily walks with him were things not to be forgotten. Once and once only we had a good fight about the Reform Bill during a walk up Greenhead Ghyll to see the unfinished sheepfold, recorded in *Michael*. But I am sure that our political disagreement did not at all interfere with our enjoyment of each other's society; for I think that in the great principles of things we agreed very entirely." It ought to be possible, for that matter, for magnanimous men, even if they do not agree in the great principles of things, to keep pleasant terms with one another for more than one afternoon's walk. Many pilgrims came, and the poet seems to have received them with cheerful equanimity. Emerson called upon him in 1833, and found him plain, elderly, white-haired, not prepossessing. "He led me out into his garden, and showed me the gravel walk in which thousands of his lines were composed. He had just returned from Staffa, and within three days had made three sonnets on Fingal's Cave, and was composing a fourth when he was called in to see me. He said, 'If you are interested in my verses, perhaps you will like to hear these lines.' I gladly assented, and he recollected himself for a few moments, and then stood forth and repeated, one after another, the three entire sonnets with great animation. This recitation was so unlooked for and surprising—he, the old Wordsworth, standing apart, and reciting to me in a garden-walk like a schoolboy declaiming—that I was at first near to laugh; but recollecting myself, that I had come thus far to see a poet, and he was chanting poems to me, I saw that he was right, and I was wrong, and gladly gave myself up to him. He never was in haste to publish; partly because he corrected a

good deal. . . . He preferred such of his poems as touched the affections to any others ; for whatever is didactic—what theories of society and so on—might perish quickly, but whatever combined a truth with an affection was good to-day and good for ever." (*English Traits*, ch. i.)

Wordsworth was far too wise to encourage the pilgrims to turn into abiding sojourners in his chosen land. Clough has described how, when he was a lad of eighteen (1837), with a mild surprise he heard the venerable poet correct the tendency to exaggerate the importance of flowers and fields, lakes, waterfalls, and scenery. "People come to the Lakes," said Wordsworth, "and are charmed with a particular spot, and build a house, and find themselves discontented, forgetting that these things are only the sauce and garnish of life."

In spite of a certain hardness and stiffness, Wordsworth must have been an admirable companion for anybody capable of true elevation of mind. The unfortunate Haydon says, with his usual accent of enthusiasm, after a saunter at Hampstead, "Never did any man so beguile the time as Wordsworth. His purity of heart, his kindness, his soundness of principle, his information, his knowledge, and the intense and eager feelings with which he pours forth all he knows, affect, interest, and enchant one." (*Autobiog.* i. 298, 384.) The diary of Crabb Robinson, the correspondence of Charles Lamb, the delightful autobiography of Mrs. Fletcher, and much less delightfully the autobiography of Harriet Martineau, all help us to realise by many a trait Wordsworth's daily walk and conversation. Of all the glimpses that we get, from these and many other sources, none are more pleasing than those of the intercourse between Wordsworth and Scott. They were the two manliest and most wholesome men of genius of their time. They held different theories of poetic art, but their affection and esteem for one another never varied, from the early days when Scott and his young wife visited Wordsworth in his cottage at Grasmere, down to that sorrowful autumn evening (1831) when Wordsworth and his daughter went to Abbotsford to bid farewell to the wondrous potentate, then just about to start on his vain search for new life, followed by "the might of the whole earth's good wishes."

Of Wordsworth's demeanour and physical presence, De Quincey's account, silly, coxcombical, and vulgar, is the worst ; Carlyle's, as might be expected from his magical gift of portraiture, is the best. Carlyle cared little for Wordsworth's poetry, had a real respect for the antique greatness of his devotion to Poverty and Peasantry, recognised his strong intellectual powers and strong character, but thought him rather dull, bad-tempered, unproductive, and almost wearisome, and found his divine reflections and unfathomabilities stunted, scanty, uncertain, palish. From these and many other disparagements, one gladly passes to the picture of the poet as he was in the flesh at a breakfast party given by Henry Taylor, at a tavern in St. James's Street, in 1840. The subject of the talk was Literature, its laws, practices, and observances :—"He talked well in his way ; with veracity, easy brevity, and force ; as a wise tradesman would of his tools and workshop, and as no unwise one could. His voice was good, frank, and sonorous, though practically clear, distinct, and forcible, rather than melodious ; the tone of him business-like, sedately confident, no discourtesy, yet no anxiety about being courteous : a fine wholesome rusticity, fresh as his mountain breezes, sat well on the stalwart veteran, and on all he said and did. You would have said he was a usually taciturn man, glad to unlock himself, to audience sympathetic and intelligent, when such offered itself. His face bore marks of much, not always peaceful, meditation ; the look of it not bland or benevolent, so much as close, impregnable, and hard ; a man

*multa tacere loquive paratus*, in a world where he had experienced no lack of contradictions as he strode along! The eyes were not very brilliant, but they had a quiet clearness; there was enough of brow, and well shaped; rather too much of cheek ('horse-face,' I have heard satirists say), face of squarish shape and decidedly longish, as I think the head itself was (its 'length' going *horizontal*): he was large-boned, lean, but still firm-knit, tall, and strong-looking when he stood; a right good old steel-gray figure, with a fine rustic simplicity and dignity about him, and a veracious *strength* looking through him which might have suited one of those old steel-gray *Markgrafs* (Graf = *Grau*, 'Steel-gray') whom Henry the Fowler set up to ward the marches, and do battle with the intrusive heathen, in a stalwart and judicious manner."

Whoever might be his friends within an easy walk, or dwelling afar, the poet knew how to live his own life. The three fine sonnets headed *Personal Talk*, so well known, so warmly accepted in our better hours, so easily forgotten in hours not so good between pleasant levities and grinding preoccupations, show us how little his neighbours had to do with the poet's genial seasons of "smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought."

For those days Wordsworth was a considerable traveller. Between 1820 and 1837 he made long tours abroad, to Switzerland, to Holland, to Belgium, to Italy. In other years he visited Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. He was no mechanical tourist, admiring to order and marvelling by regulation; and he confessed to Mrs. Fletcher that he fell asleep before the Venus de Medici at Florence. But the product of these wanderings is to be seen in some of his best sonnets, such as the first on Calais Beach, the famous one on Westminster Bridge, the second of the two on Bruges, where "the Spirit of Antiquity mounts to the seat of grace within the mind—a deeper peace than that in deserts found"—and in some other fine pieces.

In weightier matters than mere travel, Wordsworth showed himself no mere recluse. He watched the great affairs then being transacted in Europe with the ardent interest of his youth, and his sonnets to Liberty, commemorating the attack by France upon the Swiss, the fate of Venice, the struggle of Hofer, the resistance of Spain, give no unworthy expression to the best of the varied motives that animated England in her long struggle with Bonaparte. The sonnet to Toussaint l'Ouverture concludes with some of the noblest lines in the English language. The strong verses on the expected death of Mr. Fox are alive with a magnanimous public spirit that goes deeper than political opinion. In his young days he had sent Fox a copy of the *Lyrical Ballads*, with a long letter indicating his sense of Fox's great and generous qualities. Pitt, he admits that he could never regard with complacency. "I believe him, however," he said, "to have been as disinterested a man, and as true a lover of his country, as it was possible for so ambitious a man to be. His first wish (though probably unknown to himself) was that his country should prosper under his administration; his next that it should prosper. Could the order of these wishes have been reversed, Mr. Pitt would have avoided many of the grievous mistakes into which, I think, he fell." "You always went away from Burke," he once told Haydon, "with your mind filled; from Fox with your feelings excited; and from Pitt with wonder at his having had the power to make the worse appear the better reason."

Of the poems composed under the influence of that best kind of patriotism which ennobles local attachments by associating them with the lasting elements of moral grandeur and heroism, it is needless to speak. They have long taken their place

as something higher even than literary classics. As years began to dull the old penetration of a mind which had once approached, like other youths, the shield of human nature from the golden side, and had been eager to "clear a passage for just government," Wordsworth lost his interest in progress. Waterloo may be taken for the date at which his social grasp began to fail, and with it his poetic glow. He opposed Catholic emancipation as stubbornly as Eldon, and the Reform Bill as bitterly as Croker. For the practical reforms of his day, even in education, for which he had always spoken up, Wordsworth was not a force. His heart clung to England as he found it. "This concrete attachment to the scenes about him," says Mr. Myers, "had always formed an important element in his character. Ideal politics, whether in Church or State, had never occupied his mind, which sought rather to find its informing principles embodied in the England of his own day." This flowed, we may suppose, from Burke. In a passage in the seventh Book of the *Prelude*, he describes, in lines a little prosaic but quite true, how he sat, saw, and heard, not unthankful nor uninspired, the great orator.

"While he forewarns, denounces, launches forth,  
Against all systems, built on abstract rights."

The Church, as conceived by the spirit of Laud, and described by Hooker's voice, was the great symbol of the union of high and stable institution with thought, faith, right living, and "sacred religion, mother of form and fear." As might be expected from such a point of view, the church pieces, to which Wordsworth gave so much thought, are, with few exceptions, such as the sonnet on *Seathwaite Chapel*, formal, hard, and but thinly enriched with spiritual grace or unction. They are ecclesiastical, not religious. In religious poetry, the Church of England finds her most affecting voice, not in Wordsworth, but in the *Lyra Innocentium* and the *Christian Year*. Wordsworth abounds in the true devotional cast of mind, but less than anywhere else in his properly ecclesiastical verse.

It was perhaps natural that when events no longer inspired him, Wordsworth should have turned with new feelings towards the classic, and discovered a virtue in classic form to which his own method had hitherto made him a little blind. Towards the date of Waterloo, he read over again some of the Latin writers, in attempting to prepare his son for college. He even at a later date set about a translation of the *Æneid* of Virgil, but the one permanent result of the classic movement in his mind is *Laodamia*. Earlier in life he had translated some books of Ariosto at the rate of a hundred lines a day, and he even attempted fifteen of the sonnets of Michael Angelo, but so much meaning is compressed into so little room in those pieces that he found the difficulty insurmountable. He had a high opinion of the resources of the Italian language. The poetry of Dante and of Michael Angelo, he said, proves that if there be little majesty and strength in Italian verse, the fault is in the authors and not in the tongue.

Our last glimpse of Wordsworth in the full and peculiar power of his genius is the Ode *Composed on an evening of extraordinary splendour and beauty*. It is the one exception to the critical dictum that all his good work was done in the decade between 1798 and 1808. He lived for more than thirty years after this fine composition. But he added nothing more of value to the work that he had already done. The public appreciation of it was very slow. The most influential among the critics were for long hostile and contemptuous. Never at any time did Wordsworth come near to such popularity as that of Scott or of Byron. Nor was that all. For many years most readers of poetry thought more even of *Lalla Rookh* than

of the *Excursion*. While Scott, Byron, and Moore were receiving thousands of pounds, Wordsworth received nothing. Between 1830 and 1840 the current turned in Wordsworth's direction, and when he received the honour of a doctor's degree at the Oxford Commemoration in 1839, the Sheldonian theatre made him the hero of the day. In the spring of 1843 Southey died, and Sir Robert Peel pressed Wordsworth to succeed him in the office of Poet Laureate. "It is a tribute of respect," said the Minister, "justly due to the first of living poets." But almost immediately the light of his common popularity was eclipsed by Tennyson, as it had earlier been eclipsed by Scott, by Byron, and in some degree by Shelley. Yet his fame among those who know, among competent critics with a right to judge, to-day stands higher than it ever stood. Only two writers have contributed so many lines of daily popularity and application. In the handbooks of familiar quotations Wordsworth fills more space than anybody save Shakespeare and Pope. He exerted commanding influence over great minds that have powerfully affected our generation. "I never before," said George Eliot in the days when her character was forming itself (1839), "met with so many of my own feelings expressed just as I should like them," and her reverence for Wordsworth remained to the end. J. S. Mill has described how important an event in his life was his first reading of Wordsworth. "What made his poems a medicine for my state of mind was that they expressed not mere outward beauty, but states of feeling and of thought coloured by feeling, under the excitement of beauty. I needed to be made to feel that there was real permanent happiness in tranquil contemplation. Wordsworth taught me this, not only without turning away from, but with greatly increased interest in the common feelings and common destiny of human beings." (*Autobiog.*, 148.) This effect of Wordsworth on Mill is the very illustration of the phrase of a later poet of our own day, one of the most eminent and by his friends best beloved of all those whom Wordsworth had known, and on whom he poured out a generous portion of his own best spirit:—

"Time may restore us in his course  
Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force :  
But where will Europe's latter hour  
Again find Wordsworth's healing power?"

It is the power for which Matthew Arnold found this happy designation, that compensates us for that absence of excitement of which the heedless complain in Wordsworth's verse—excitement so often meaning mental fever, hysterics, distorted passion, or other fitful agitation of the soul.

Pretensions are sometimes advanced as to Wordsworth's historic position, which involve a mistaken view of literary history. Thus, we are gravely told by the too zealous Wordsworthian that the so-called poets of the eighteenth century were simply men of letters; they had various accomplishments and great general ability, but their thoughts were expressed in prose, or in mere metrical diction, which passed current as poetry without being so. Yet Burns belonged wholly to the eighteenth century (1759-96), and no verse-writer is so little literary as Burns, so little prosaic; no writer more truly poetic in melody, diction, thought, feeling, and spontaneous song. It was Burns who showed Wordsworth's own youth "How verse may build a princely throne on humble truth." Nor can we understand how Cowper is to be set down as simply a man of letters. We may, too, if we please, deny the name of poetry to Collins's tender and pensive *Ode to Evening*; but we can only do this on critical principles, which would end in classing the author of *Lycidas*

and *Comus*, of the *Allegro* and *Penseroso*, as a writer of various accomplishments and great general ability, but at bottom simply a man of letters and by no means a poet. It is to Gray, however, that we must turn for the distinctive character of the best poetry of the eighteenth century. With reluctance we will surrender the Pindaric Odes, though not without risking the observation that some of Wordsworth's own criticism on Gray is as narrow and as much beside the mark as Jeffrey's on the *Excursion*. But the *Ode on Eton College* is not to have grudged to it the noble name and true quality of poetry, merely because, as one of Johnson's most unfortunate criticisms expresses it, the ode suggests nothing to Gray which every beholder does not equally think and feel. To find beautiful and pathetic language, set to harmonious numbers, for the common impressions of meditative minds, is no small part of the poet's task. That part has never been achieved by any poet in any tongue, with more complete perfection and success than in the immortal *Elegy*, of which we may truly say that it has for nearly a century and a half given to greater multitudes of men more of the exquisite pleasure of poetry than any other single piece in all the glorious treasury of English verse. It abounds, as Johnson says, "with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo." These moving commonplaces of the human lot, Gray approached through books and studious contemplation; not, as Wordsworth approached them, by daily contact with the lives and habit of men and the forces and magical apparitions of external nature. But it is a narrow view to suppose that the men of the eighteenth century did not look through the literary conventions of the day to the truths of life and nature behind them. The conventions have gone, or are changed, and we are all glad of it. Wordsworth effected a wholesome deliverance when he attacked the artificial diction, the personifications, the allegories, the antitheses, the barren rhymes and monotonous metres, which the reigning taste had approved. But while welcoming the new freshness, sincerity, and direct and fertile return on nature, that is a very bad reason why we should disparage poetry so genial, so simple, so humane, and so perpetually pleasing as the best verse of the rationalistic century.

What Wordsworth did was to deal with themes that had been partially handled by precursors and contemporaries, in a larger and more devoted spirit, with wider amplitude of illustration, and with the steadfastness and persistency of a religious teacher. "Every great poet is a teacher," he said; "I wish to be considered as a teacher or as nothing." It may be doubted whether his general proposition is at all true, and whether it is any more the essential business of a poet to be a teacher than it was the business of Handel, Beethoven, or Mozart. They attune the soul to high states of feeling; the direct lesson is often as nought. But of himself no view could be more sound. He is a teacher, or he is nothing. "To console the afflicted; to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy happier; to teach the young and the gracious of every age to see, to think, and feel, and therefore to become more actively and sincerely virtuous"—that was his vocation; to show that the mutual adaptation of the external world and the inner mind is able to shape a paradise from the "simple produce of the common day"—that was his high argument.

Simplification was, as I have said elsewhere, the keynote of the revolutionary time. Wordsworth was its purest exponent, but he had one remarkable peculiarity, which made him, in England at least, not only its purest but its greatest. While leading men to pierce below the artificial and conventional to the natural man and natural life, as Rousseau did, Wordsworth still cherished the symbols, the traditions,

and the great institutes of social order. Simplification of life and thought and feeling was to be accomplished without summoning up the dangerous spirit of destruction and revolt. Wordsworth lived with nature, yet waged no angry railing war against society. The chief opposing force to Wordsworth in literature was Byron. Whatever he was in his heart, Byron in his work was drawn by all the forces of his character, genius, and circumstances to the side of violent social change, and hence the extraordinary popularity of Byron in the continental camp of emancipation. Communion with nature is in Wordsworth's doctrine the school of duty. With Byron nature is the mighty consoler and the vindicator of the rebel.

A curious thing, which we may note in passing, is that Wordsworth, who clung fervently to the historic foundations of society as it stands, was wholly indifferent to history; while Byron, on the contrary, as the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* is enough to show, had at least the sentiment of history in as great a degree as any poet that ever lived, and has given to it by far the most magnificent expression. No doubt, it was history on its romantic, and not its philosophic or its political side.

On Wordsworth's exact position in the hierarchy of sovereign poets, a deep difference of estimate still divides even the most excellent judges. Nobody now dreams of placing him so low as the *Edinburgh Reviewers* did, nor so high as Southey placed him when he wrote to the author of *Philip van Artevelde* in 1829, that a greater poet than Wordsworth there never has been nor ever will be. An extravagance of this kind was only the outburst of generous friendship. Coleridge deliberately placed Wordsworth "nearest of all modern writers to Shakespeare and Milton, yet in a kind perfectly unborrowed and his own." Arnold, himself a poet of rare and memorable quality, declares his firm belief that the poetical performance of Wordsworth is, after that of Shakespeare and Milton, undoubtedly the most considerable in our language from the Elizabethan age to the present time. Dryden, Pope, Gray, Cowper, Goldsmith, Burns, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, Keats—"Wordsworth's name deserves to stand, and will finally stand, above them all." Mr. Myers, also a poet, and the author of a volume on Wordsworth as much distinguished by insight as by admirable literary grace and power, talks of "a Plato, a Dante, a Wordsworth," all three in a breath, as stars of equal magnitude in the great spiritual firmament. To Mr. Swinburne, on the contrary, all these panegyrical estimates savour of monstrous and intolerable exaggeration. Amid these contentions of celestial minds it will be safest to content ourselves with one or two plain observations in the humble positive degree, without hurrying into high and final comparatives and superlatives.

One admission is generally made at the outset. Whatever definition of poetry we fix upon, whether that it is the language of passion or imagination formed into regular numbers; or, with Milton, that it should be "simple, sensuous, passionate;" in any case there are great tracts in Wordsworth which, by no definition and on no terms, can be called poetry. If we say with Shelley, that poetry is what redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man, and is the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds, then are we bound to agree that Wordsworth records too many moments that are not specially good or happy, that he redeems from decay frequent visitations that are not from any particular divinity in man, and treats them all as very much on a level. Mr. Arnold is undoubtedly right in his view that, to be receivable as a classic, Wordsworth must be relieved of a great deal of the poetical baggage that now encumbers him.

The faults and hindrances in Wordsworth's poetry are obvious to every reader. For one thing, the intention to instruct, to improve the occasion, is too deliberate and too hardly pressed. "We hate poetry," said Keats, "that has a palpable design upon us. Poetry should be great and unobtrusive." Charles Lamb's friendly remonstrance on one of Wordsworth's poems is applicable to more of them. "The instructions conveyed in it are too direct; they don't slide into the mind of the reader while he is imagining no such matter."

Then, except the sonnets and half a score of the pieces where he reaches his topmost height, there are few of his poems that are not too long, and it often happens even that no degree of reverence for the teacher prevents one from finding passages of almost unbearable prolixity. A defence was once made by a great artist for what, to the unregenerate mind, seemed the merciless tardiness of movement in one of Goethe's romances, that it was meant to impress on his readers the slow march and the tedium of events in human life. The lenient reader may give Wordsworth the advantage of the same ingenious explanation. We may venture on a counsel which is more to the point, in warning the student that not seldom in these blocks of afflicting prose, suddenly we come upon some of the profoundest and most beautiful passages that the poet ever wrote. In deserts of preaching we find, almost within sight of one another, delightful oases of purest poetry. Besides being prolix, Wordsworth is often cumbrous; has often no flight; is not liquid, is not musical. He is heavy and self-conscious with the burden of his message. How much at his best he is, when, as in the admirable and truly Wordsworthian poem of *Michael*, he spares us a sermon and leaves us the story. Then, he is apt to wear a somewhat stiff-cut garment of solemnity, when not solemnity, but either sternness or sadness, which are so different things, would seem the fitter mood. In truth Wordsworth hardly knows how to be stern, as Dante or Milton was stern; nor has he the note of plangent sadness which strikes the ear in men as morally inferior to him as Rousseau, Keats, Shelley, or Coleridge; nor has he the Olympian air with which Goethe delivered sage oracles. This mere solemnity is specially oppressive in some parts of the *Excursion*—the performance where we best see the whole poet, and where the poet most absolutely identifies himself with his subject. Yet, even in the midst of these solemn discoursings, he suddenly introduces an episode in which his peculiar power is at its height. There is no better instance of this than the passage in the Second Book of the *Excursion*, where he describes with a fidelity, at once realistic and poetic, the worn-out almsman, his patient life and sorry death, and then the unimaginable vision in the skies, as they brought the ancient man down through dull mists from the mountain ridge to die. These hundred and seventy lines are like the landscape in which they were composed; you can no more appreciate the beauty of the one by a single or a second perusal, than you can the other in a scamper through the vale on the box of the coach. But any lover of poetry who will submit himself with leisure and meditation to the impressions of the story, the pity of it, the naturalness of it, the glory and the mystic splendours of the indifferent heavens, will feel that here indeed is the true strength which out of the trivial raises expression for the pathetic and the sublime.

Apart, however, from excess of prolixity and of solemnity, can it be really contended that in purely poetic quality—in aerial freedom and space, in radiant purity of light or depth and variety of colour, in penetrating and subtle sweetness of music, in supple mastery of the instrument, in vivid spontaneity of imagination, in clean-cut sureness of touch—Wordsworth is not surpassed by men who were



below him in weight and greatness? Even in his own field of the simple and the pastoral has he touched so sweet and spontaneous a note as Burns's *Daisy*, or the *Mouse*? When men seek immersion or absorption in the atmosphere of pure poesy, without lesson or moral, or anything but delight of fancy and stir of imagination, they will find him less congenial to their mood than poets not worthy to loose the latchet of his shoe in the greater elements of his art. In all these comparisons, it is not merely Wordsworth's theme and motive and dominant note that are different; the skill of hand is different, and the musical ear and the imaginative eye.

To maintain or to admit so much as this, however, is not to say the last word. The question is whether Wordsworth, however unequal to Shelley in lyric quality, to Coleridge or to Keats in imaginative quality, to Burns in tenderness, warmth, and that humour which is so nearly akin to pathos, to Byron in vividness and energy, yet possesses excellences of his own which place him in other respects above these master-spirits of his time. If the question is to be answered affirmatively, it is clear that only in one direction must we look. The trait that really places Wordsworth on an eminence above his poetic contemporaries, and ranks him, as the ages are likely to rank him, on a line just short of the greatest of all time, is his direct appeal to will and conduct. "There is volition and self-government in every line of his poetry, and his best thoughts come from his steady resistance to the ebb and flow of ordinary desires and regrets. He contests the ground inch by inch with all despondent and indolent humours, and often, too, with movements of inconsiderate and wasteful joy." (*R. H. Hutton*.) That would seem to be his true distinction and superiority over men to whom more had been given of fire, passion, and ravishing music. Those who deem the end of poetry to be intoxication, fever, or rainbow dreams, can care little for Wordsworth. If its end be not intoxication, but on the contrary a search from the wide regions of imagination and feeling, for elements of composure deep and pure, and of self-government in a far loftier sense than the merely prudential, then Wordsworth has a gift of his own in which he was approached by no poet of his time. Scott's sane and humane genius, with much the same aims, yet worked with different methods. He once remonstrated with Lockhart for being too apt to measure things by some reference to literature. "I have read books enough," said Scott, "and observed and conversed with enough of eminent and splendidly cultivated minds; but I assure you, I have heard higher sentiments from the lips of poor uneducated men and women, when exerting the spirit of severe yet gentle heroism under difficulties and afflictions, or speaking their simple thoughts as to circumstances in the lot of friends and neighbours, than I ever yet met with out of the pages of the Bible. We shall never learn to respect our real calling and destiny, unless we have taught ourselves to consider everything as moonshine compared with the education of the heart." This admirable deliverance of Scott's is, so far as it goes, eminently Wordsworthian; but Wordsworth went higher and further, striving not only to move the sympathies of the heart, but to enlarge the understanding, and exalt and widen the spiritual vision, all with the aim of leading us towards firmer and austerer self-control.

Certain favourers of Wordsworth answer our question with a triumphant affirmative, on the strength of some ethical, or metaphysical, or theological system which they believe themselves to find in him. But is it credible that poets can permanently live by systems? Or is not system, whether ethical, theological, or philosophical, the heavy lead of poetry? Lucretius is indisputably one of the mighty poets of the world, but Epicureanism is not the soul of that majestic muse. So with Words-

worth. (Thought is, on the whole, predominant over feeling in his verse; the a prevailing atmosphere of deep and solemn reflection does not make a system. His theology and his ethics, and his so-called Platonical metaphysics, have as little to do with the power of his poetry over us, as the imputed Arianism or any other aspect of the theology of *Paradise Lost* has to do with the strength and the sublimity of Milton, and his claim to a high perpetual place in the hearts of men. It is best to be entirely sceptical as to the existence of system and ordered philosophy in Wordsworth. When he tells us that "one impulse from a vernal wood may teach you more of man, of moral evil and of good, than all the sages can," such a proposition cannot be seriously taken as more than a half-playful sally for the benefit of some too bookish friend. No impulse from a vernal wood can teach us anything at all of moral evil and of good. When he says that it is his faith, "that every flower enjoys the air it breathes," and that when the budding twigs spread out their fan to catch the air, he is compelled to think "that there was pleasure there," he expresses a charming poetic fancy and no more, and it is idle to pretend to see in it the fountain of a system of philosophy. In the famous *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, the poet doubtless does point to a set of philosophic ideas, more or less complete; but the thought from which he sets out, that our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting, and that we are less and less able to perceive the visionary gleam, less and less alive to the glory and the dream of external nature, as infancy recedes farther from us, is, with all respect for the declaration of Mr. Ruskin to the contrary, contrary to notorious fact, experience, and truth. It is a beggarly conception, no doubt, to judge as if poetry should always be capable of a prose rendering; but it is at least fatal to the philosophic pretension of a line or a stanza if, when it is fairly reduced to prose, the prose discloses that it is nonsense, and there is at least one stanza of the great *Ode* that this doom would assuredly await. Wordsworth's claim, his special gift, his lasting contribution, lies in the extraordinary strenuousness, sincerity, and insight with which he first idealises and glorifies the vast universe around us, and then makes of it, not a theatre on which men play their parts, but an animate presence, intermingling with our works, pouring its companionable spirit about us, and "breathing grandeur upon the very humblest face of human life." This twofold and conjoint performance, consciously and expressly—perhaps only too consciously—undertaken by a man of strong inborn sensibility to natural impressions, and systematically carried out in a lifetime of brooding meditation and active composition, is Wordsworth's distinguishing title to fame and gratitude. In "words that speak of nothing more than what we are," he revealed new faces of nature; he dwelt on men as they are men themselves, he strove to do that which has been declared to be the true secret of force in art, to make the trivial serve the expression of the sublime. "Wordsworth's distinctive work," Mr. Ruskin has justly said (*Modern Painters*, iii. 293), "was a war with pomp and pretence, and a display of the majesty of simple feelings and humble hearts, together with high reflective truths in his analysis of the courses of policies and ways of men; without these his love of nature would have been comparatively worthless."

Yet let us not forget that he possessed the gift which to an artist is the very root of the matter. He saw nature truly, he saw her as she is, and with his own eyes. The critic whom I have just quoted boldly pronounces him "the keenest eyed of all modern poets for what is deep and essential in nature." When he describes the daisy, casting the beauty of its star-shaped shadow on the smooth stone, or the boundless depth of the abysses of the sky, or the clouds made vivid as fire by the rays

belongt, every touch is true, not the copying of a literary phrase, but the result of direct observation.

It is true that Nature has sides to which Wordsworth was not energetically alive—Nature “red in tooth and claw.” He was not energetically alive to the blind and remorseless cruelties of life and the world. When in early spring he heard the blended notes of the birds, and saw the budding twigs and primrose tufts, it grieved him amid such fair works of nature, to think “what man has made of man.” As if nature itself, excluding the conscious doings of that portion of nature which is the human race, and excluding also nature’s own share in the making of poor Man, did not abound in raking cruelties and horrors of her own. “*Edel sei der Mensch,*” sang Goethe in a noble psalm, “*Hilfreich und gut, denn das allein unterscheidet ihn, Von allen Wesen die wir kennen.*” “*Let man be noble, helpful, and good, for that alone distinguishes him from all beings that we know. No feeling has nature : to good and bad gives the sun his light, and for the evildoer as for the best shine moon and stars.*” That the laws which nature has fixed for our lives are mighty and eternal, Wordsworth comprehended as fully as Goethe, but not that they are laws pitiless as iron. Wordsworth had not rooted in him the sense of Fate—of the inexorable sequences of things, of the terrible chain that so often binds an awful end to some slight and trivial beginning.

This optimism or complacency in Wordsworth will be understood if we compare his spirit and treatment with that of the illustrious French painter whose subjects and whose life were in some ways akin to his own. Millet, like Wordsworth, went to the realities of humble life for his inspiration. The peasant of the great French plains and the forest was to him what the Cumbrian dalesman was to Wordsworth. But he saw the peasant differently. “You watch figures in the fields,” said Millet, “digging and delving with spade or pick. You see one of them from time to time straightening his loins, and wiping his face with the back of his hand. Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow. Is that the gay lively labour in which some people would have you believe? Yet it is there that for me you must seek true humanity and great poetry. They say that I deny the charm of the country ; I find in it far more than charms, I find infinite splendours. I see in it, just as they do, the little flowers of which Christ said that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. I see clearly enough the sun as he spreads his splendour amid the clouds. None the less do I see on the plain, all smoking, the horses at the plough. I see in some stony corner a man all worn out, whose *han han* have been heard ever since daybreak—trying to straighten himself a moment to get breath.” The hardness, the weariness, the sadness, the ugliness, out of which Millet’s consummate skill made pictures that affect us like strange music, were to Wordsworth not the real part of the thing. They were all absorbed in the thought of nature as a whole, wonderful, mighty, harmonious, and benign.

We are not called upon to place great men of his stamp as if they were collegians in a class-list. It is best to take with thankfulness and admiration from each man what he has to give. What Wordsworth does is to assuage, to reconcile, to fortify. He has not Shakespeare’s richness and vast compass, nor Milton’s sublime and unflinching strength, nor Dante’s severe, vivid, ardent force of vision. Probably he is too deficient in clear beauty of form and in concentrated power to be classed by the ages among these great giants. We cannot be sure. We may leave it to the ages to decide. But Wordsworth, at any rate, by his secret of bringing the infinite into common life, as he evokes it out of common life, has the skill to lead us, so long as we yield ourselves to his

influence, into inner moods of settled peace, to touch "the depth and not the tumult of the soul," to give us quietness, strength, steadfastness, and purpose, whether to do or to endure. All art or poetry that has the effect of breathing into men's hearts, even if it be only for a space, these moods of settled peace, and strongly confirming their judgment and their will for good,—whatever limitations may be found besides, however prosaic may be some or much of the detail,—is great art and noble poetry, and the creator of it will always hold, as Wordsworth holds, a sovereign title to the reverence and gratitude of mankind. 14

J. M.

*October 1888.*



# WORDSWORTH'S POETICAL WORKS

## LINES

WRITTEN AS A SCHOOL EXERCISE AT  
HAWKSHEAD, ANNO ÆTATIS 14

"AND has the Sun his flaming chariot  
driven  
Two hundred times around the ring of  
heaven,  
Since Science first, with all her sacred  
train,  
Beneath yon roof began her heavenly reign?  
While thus I mused, methought, before  
mine eyes,  
The Power of EDUCATION seemed to rise;  
Not she whose rigid precepts trained the  
boy  
Dead to the sense of every finer joy;  
Nor that vile wretch who bade the tender  
age  
Spurn Reason's law and humour Passion's  
rage;  
But she who trains the generous British  
youth  
In the bright paths of fair majestic Truth:  
Emerging slow from Academus' grove  
In heavenly majesty she seemed to move.  
Stern was her forehead, but a smile serene  
'Softened the terrors of her awful mien.'  
Close at her side were all the powers, de-  
signed  
To curb, exalt, reform the tender mind:  
With panting breast, now pale as winter  
snows,  
Now flushed as Hebe, Emulation rose;  
Shame followed after with reverted eye,  
And hue far deeper than the Tyrian dye;  
Last Industry appeared with steady pace,  
A smile sat beaming on her pensive face.  
I gazed upon the visionary train,



Threw back my eyes, returned, and gazed  
again.

When lo! the heavenly goddess thus began,  
Through all my frame the pleasing accents  
ran.

" ' When Superstition left the golden light  
And fled indignant to the shades of night;  
When pure Religion reared the peaceful  
breast

And lulled the warring passions into rest,  
Drove far away the savage thoughts that  
roll

In the dark mansions of the bigot's soul,  
Enlivening Hope displayed her cheerful ray,  
And beamed on Britain's sons a brighter  
day;

So when on Ocean's face the storm sub-  
sides,

Hushed are the winds and silent are the  
tides;

The God of day, in all the pomp of light,  
Moves through the vault of heaven, and  
dissipates the night;

Wide o'er the main a trembling lustre plays,  
The glittering waves reflect the dazzling  
blaze

Science with joy saw Superstition fly  
Before the lustre of Religion's eye;  
With rapture she beheld Britannia smile,  
Clapped her strong wings, and sought the  
cheerful isle,

The shades of night no more the soul in-  
volve,

She sheds her beam, and, lo! the shades  
dissolve;

No jarring monks, to gloomy cell confined,  
With mazy rules perplex the weary mind;  
No shadowy forms entice the soul aside,  
Secure she walks, Philosophy her guide.

Britain, who long her warriors had adored,  
And deemed all merit centred in the sword ;  
Britain, who thought to stain the field was  
fame,  
Now honoured Edward's less than Bacon's  
name.

Her sons no more in listed fields advance  
To ride the ring, or toss the beamy lance ;  
No longer steel their indurated hearts  
To the mild influence of the finer arts ;  
Quick to the secret grotto they retire  
To court majestic truth, or wake the golden  
lyre ;

By generous Emulation taught to rise,  
The seats of learning brave the distant  
skies.

Then noble Sandys, inspired with great de-  
sign,  
Reared Hawkshead's happy roof, and called  
it mine.

There have I loved to show the tender age  
The golden precepts of the classic page ;  
To lead the mind to those Elysian plains  
Where, throned in gold, immortal Science  
reigns ;

Fair to the view is sacred Truth displayed,  
In all the majesty of light arrayed,  
To teach, on rapid wings, the curious soul  
To roam from heaven to heaven, from pole  
to pole,

From thence to search the mystic cause of  
things

And follow Nature to her secret springs ;  
Nor less to guide the fluctuating youth  
Firm in the sacred paths of moral truth,  
To regulate the mind's disordered frame,  
And quench the passions kindling into  
flame ;

The glimmering fires of Virtue to enlarge,  
And purge from Vice's dross my tender  
charge.

Oft have I said, the paths of Fame pursue,  
And all that Virtue dictates, dare to do ;  
Go to the world, peruse the book of man,  
And learn from thence thy own defects to  
scan ;

Severely honest, break no plighted trust,  
But coldly rest not here—be more than  
just ;

Join to the rigours of the sires of Rome  
The gentler manners of the private dome ;  
When Virtue weeps in agony of woe,  
Teach from the heart the tender tear to  
flow ;

If Pleasure's soothing song thy soul entice,  
Or all the gaudy pomp of splendid Vice,  
Arise superior to the Siren's power,  
The wretch, the short-lived vision of an  
hour ;

Soon fades her cheek, her blushing beauties  
fly,

As fades the chequered bow that paints the  
sky,

So shall thy sire, whilst hope his breast  
inspires,

And wakes anew life's glimmering trem-  
bling fires,

Hear Britain's sons rehearse thy praise with  
joy,

Look up to heaven, and bless his darling  
boy.

If e'er these precepts quelled the passions'  
strife,

If e'er they smoothed the rugged walks of  
life,

If e'er they pointed forth the blissful way  
That guides the spirit to eternal day,  
Do thou, if gratitude inspire thy breast,  
Spurn the soft fetters of lethargic rest.

Awake, awake ! and snatch the slumbering  
lyre,

Let this bright morn and Sandys the song  
inspire.'

" I looked obedience : the celestial Fair  
Smiled like the morn, and vanished into  
air."

1785.

### EXTRACT

FROM THE CONCLUSION OF A POEM, COM-  
POSED IN ANTICIPATION OF LEAVING  
SCHOOL

Written at Hawkshead. The beautiful image  
with which this poem concludes, suggested itself  
to me while I was resting in a boat along with my  
companions under the shade of a magnificent row  
of sycamores, which then extended their branches  
from the shore of the promontory upon which  
stands the ancient, and at that time the more  
picturesque, Hall of Coniston, the seat of the Le  
Flemings from very early times. The poem of  
which it was the conclusion was of many hundred  
lines, and contained thoughts and images most of  
which have been dispersed through my other  
writings.

DEAR native regions, I foretell,  
From what I feel at this farewell,

That, wheresoe'er my steps may tend,  
And whensoe'er my course shall end,  
If in that hour a single tie  
Survive of local sympathy,  
My soul will cast the backward view,  
The longing look alone on you.

Thus, while the Sun sinks down to rest  
Far in the regions of the west,  
Though to the vale no parting beam  
Be given, not one memorial gleam,  
A lingering light he fondly throws  
On the dear hills where first he rose.

1786.

## WRITTEN IN VERY EARLY YOUTH

CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.  
The kine are couched upon the dewy grass ;  
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,  
Is cropping audibly his later meal :  
Dark is the ground ; a slumber seems to steal

O'er vale, and mountain, and the starless sky.

Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,  
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to heal

That grief for which the senses still supply  
Fresh food ; for only then, when memory  
Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends ! restrain

Those busy cares that would allay my pain ;  
Oh ! leave me to myself, nor let me feel  
The officious touch that makes me droop  
again.

1786?

## AN EVENING WALK

## ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY

The young Lady to whom this was addressed was my Sister. It was composed at school, and during my two first College vacations. There is not an image in it which I have not observed ; and now, in my seventy-third year, I recollect the time and place where most of them were noticed. I will confine myself to one instance :

" Waving his hat, the shepherd, from the vale,  
Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale,—  
The dog, loud barking, 'mid the glittering rocks,  
Hunts, where his master points, the intercepted flocks."

I was an eye-witness of this for the first time while

crossing the Pass of Dunmail Raise. Upon second thought, I will mention another image :

" And, fronting the bright west, yon oak entwines  
Its darkening boughs and leaves, in stronger lines."

This is feebly and imperfectly expressed, but I recollect distinctly the very spot where this first struck me. It was in the way between Hawks-head and Ambleside, and gave me extreme pleasure. The moment was important in my poetical history ; for I date from it my consciousness of the infinite variety of natural appearances which had been unnoticed by the poets of any age or country, so far as I was acquainted with them ; and I made a resolution to supply, in some degree, the deficiency. I could not have been at that time above fourteen years of age. The description of the swans, that follows, was taken from the daily opportunities I had of observing their habits, not as confined to the gentleman's park, but in a state of nature. There were two pairs of them that divided the lake of Esthwaite and its in-and-out-flowing streams between them, never trespassing a single yard upon each other's separate domain. They were of the old magnificent species, bearing in beauty and majesty about the same relation to the Thames swan which that does to the goose. It was from the remembrance of those noble creatures I took, thirty years after, the picture of the swan which I have discarded from the poem of Dion. While I was a school-boy, the late Mr. Curwen introduced a little fleet of those birds, but of the inferior species, to the lake of Windermere. Their principal home was about his own island ; but they sailed about into remote parts of the lake, and, either from real or imagined injury done to the adjoining fields, they were got rid of at the request of the farmers and proprietors, but to the great regret of all who had become attached to them, from noticing their beauty and quiet habits. I will conclude my notice of this poem by observing that the plan of it has not been confined to a particular walk or an individual place,—a proof (of which I was unconscious at the time) of my unwillingness to submit the poetic spirit to the chains of fact and real circumstance. The country is idealised rather than described in any one of its local aspects.

General Sketch of the Lakes—Author's regret of his youth which was passed amongst them—Short description of Noon—Cascade—Noontide Retreat—Precipice and sloping Lights—Face of Nature as the Sun declines—Mountain-farm, and the Cock—Slate-quarry—Sunset—Superstition of the Country connected with that moment—Swans—Female Beggar—Twilight-sounds—Western Lights—Spirits—Night—Moonlight—Hope—Night-sounds—Conclusion.



FAR from my dearest Friend, 'tis mine to rove  
 Through bare grey dell, high wood, and pastoral cove ;  
 Where Derwent rests, and listens to the roar  
 That stuns the tremulous cliffs of high Lodore ;  
 Where peace to Grasmere's lonely island leads,  
 To willow hedge-rows, and to emerald meads ;  
 Leads to her bridge, rude church, and cottaged grounds,  
 Her rocky sheepwalks, and her woodland bounds ;  
 Where, undisturbed by winds, Winander<sup>1</sup> sleeps  
 'Mid clustering isles, and holly-sprinkled steeps ;  
 Where twilight glens endear my Esthwaite's shore,  
 And memory of departed pleasures, more.  
 Fair scenes, erewhile, I taught, a happy child,  
 The echoes of your rocks my carols wild :  
 The spirit sought not then, in cherished sadness,  
 A cloudy substitute for failing gladness.  
 In youth's keen eye the livelong day was bright,  
 The sun at morning, and the stars at night,  
 Alike, when first the bittern's hollow bill  
 Was heard, or woodcocks<sup>2</sup> roamed the moonlight hill.  
 In thoughtless gaiety I coursed the plain,  
 And hope itself was all I knew of pain ;  
 For then, the inexperienced heart would beat  
 At times, while young Content forsook her seat,  
 And wild Impatience, pointing upward, showed,  
 Through passes yet unreach'd, a brighter road.  
 Alas ! the idle tale of man is found  
 Depicted in the dial's moral round ;  
 Hope with reflection blends her social rays  
 To gild the total tablet of his days ;

<sup>1</sup> These lines are only applicable to the middle part of that lake.

<sup>2</sup> In the beginning of winter, these mountains are frequented by woodcocks, which in dark nights retire into the woods.

Yet still, the sport of some malignant power,  
 He knows but from its shade the present hour.

But why, ungrateful, dwell on idle pain ?  
 To show what pleasures yet to me remain,  
 Say, will my Friend, with unreluctant ear,  
 The history of a poet's evening hear ?

When, in the south, the wan noon,  
 brooding still,  
 Breathed a pale steam around the glaring hill,

And shades of deep-embattled clouds were seen,  
 Spotting the northern cliffs with lights between ;

When crowding cattle, checked by rails that make

A fence far stretched into the shallow lake,  
 Lashed the cool water with their restless tails,

Or from high points of rock looked out for fanning gales :

When school-boys stretched their length upon the green ;

And round the broad-spread oak, a glimmering scene,

In the rough fern-clad park, the herded deer

Shook the still-twinkling tail and glancing ear ;

When horses in the sunburnt intake<sup>3</sup> stood,  
 And vainly eyed below the tempting flood,  
 Or tracked the passenger, in mute distress,  
 With forward neck the closing gate to press—

Then, while I wandered where the huddling rill

Brightens with water-breaks the hollow ghyll<sup>4</sup>

As by enchantment, an obscure retreat  
 Opened at once, and stayed my devious feet.

While thick above the rill the branches close,

In rocky basin its wild waves repose,  
 Inverted shrubs, and moss of gloomy green,  
 Cling from the rocks, with pale wood-weeds between ;

<sup>3</sup> The word *intake* is local, and signifies a mountain-inclosure.

<sup>4</sup> Ghyll is also, I believe, a term confined to this country: ghyll, and dingle, have the same meaning.

And its own twilight softens the whole scene,

Save where aloft the subtle sunbeams shine  
On withered briars that o'er the crags recline ;

Save where, with sparkling foam, a small cascade

Illumines, from within, the leafy shade ;  
Beyond, along the vista of the brook,  
Where antique roots its bustling course o'erlook,

The eye reposes on a secret bridge<sup>1</sup>  
Half grey, half shagged with ivy to its ridge ;

There, bending o'er the stream, the listless swain

Lingers behind his disappearing wain.

—Did Sabine grace adorn my living line,  
Blandusia's praise, wild stream, should yield to thine !

Never shall ruthless minister of death  
'Mid thy soft glooms the glittering steel  
    unsheath ;

No goblets shall, for thee, be crowned with flowers,

No kid with piteous outcry thrill thy bowers ;

The mystic shapes that by thy margin rove

A more benignant sacrifice approve—

A mind, that, in a calm angelic mood  
Of happy wisdom, meditating good,  
Beholds, of all from her high powers required,

Much done, and much designed, and more desired,—

Harmonious thoughts, a soul by truth refined,

Entire affection for all human kind.

Dear Brook, farewell ! To-morrow's noon again

Shall hide me, wooing long thy wildwood strain ;

But now the sun has gained his western road,

And eve's mild hour invites my steps abroad.

While, near the midway cliff, the silvered kite

In many a whistling circle wheels her flight ;

<sup>1</sup> The reader who has made the tour of this country, will recognise, in this description, the features which characterise the lower waterfall in the grounds of Rydal.

Slant watery lights, from parting clouds, apace

Travel along the precipice's base ;  
Cheering its naked waste of scattered stone,  
By lichens grey, and scanty moss, o'er-grown ;

Where scarce the foxglove peeps, or thistle's beard ;

And restless stone-chat, all day long, is heard.

How pleasant, as the sun declines, to view

The spacious landscape change in form and hue !

Here, vanish, as in mist, before a flood  
Of bright obscurity, hill, lawn, and wood ;  
There, objects, by the searching beams betrayed,

Come forth, and here retire in purple shade ;  
Even the white stems of birch, the cottage white,

Soften their glare before the mellow light ;  
The skiffs, at anchor where with umbrage wide

Yon chestnuts half the latticed boat-house hide,

Shed from their sides, that face the sun's slant beam,

Strong flakes of radiance on the tremulous stream :

Raised by yon travelling flock, a dusty cloud  
Mounts from the road, and spreads its moving shroud ;

The shepherd, all involved in wreaths of fire,  
Now shows a shadowy speck, and now is lost entire.

Into a gradual calm the breezes sink,  
A blue rim borders all the lake's still brink ;  
There doth the twinkling aspen's foliage sleep,

And insects clothe, like dust, the glassy deep :

And now, on every side, the surface breaks  
Into blue spots, and slowly lengthening streaks ;

Here, plots of sparkling water tremble bright  
With thousand thousand twinkling points of light ;

There, waves that, hardly weltering, die away,

Tip their smooth ridges with a softer ray ;  
And now the whole wide lake in deep repose  
Is hushed, and like a burnished mirror glows,

Save where, along the shady western marge,  
Coasts, with industrious oar, the charcoal  
barge.

Their panniered train a group of potters  
goad,

Winding from side to side up the steep road ;  
The peasant, from yon cliff of fearful edge  
Shot, down the headlong path darts with  
his sledge ;

Bright beams the lonely mountain-horse  
illumine

Feeding 'mid purple heath, "green rings,"<sup>1</sup>  
and broom ;

While the sharp slope the slackened team  
confounds,

Downward the ponderous timber-wain re-  
sounds ;

In foamy breaks the rill, with merry song,  
Dashed o'er the rough rock, lightly leaps  
along ;

From lonesome chapel at the mountain's feet,  
Three humble bells their rustic chimerepeat ;  
Sounds from the water-side the hammered  
boat ;

And *blasted* quarry thunders, heard remote !

Even here, amid the sweep of endless  
woods,

Blue pomp of lakes, high cliffs, and falling  
floods,

Not undelightful are the simplest charms,  
Found by the grassy door of mountain-  
farms.

Sweetly ferocious,<sup>2</sup> round his native walks,  
Pride of his sister-wives, the monarch stalks ;  
Spur-clad his nervous feet, and firm his  
tread ;

A crest of purple tops the warrior's head.  
Bright sparks his black and rolling eye-ball  
hurls

Afar, his tail he closes and unfurls ;  
On tiptoe reared, he strains his clarion  
throat,

Threatened by faintly-answering farms  
remote :

Again with his shrill voice the mountain  
rings,

While, flapped with conscious pride, re-  
sound his wings.

<sup>1</sup> "Vivid rings of green."—GREENWOOD'S  
POEM ON SHOOTING.

<sup>2</sup> "Dolcemente feroce."—TASSO. In this de-  
scription of the cock, I remembered a spirited  
one of the same animal in *L'Agriculture, ou Les  
Géorgiques François*, of M. Rossuet.

Where, mixed with graceful birch, the  
sombreous pine

And yew-tree o'er the silver rocks recline ;  
I love to mark the quarry's moving trains,  
Dwarf panniered steeds, and men, and  
numerous wains ;

How busy all the enormous hive within,  
While Echo dallies with its various din !  
Some (hear you not their chisels' clinking  
sound ?)

Toil, small as pigmies in the gulf profound ;  
Some, dim between the lofty cliffs descried,  
O'erwalk the slender plank from side to  
side ;

These, by the pale-blue rocks that ceaseless  
ring,

In airy baskets hanging, work and sing.  
Just where a cloud above the mountain  
rears

An edge all flame, the broadening sun  
appears ;

A long blue bar its ægis orb divides,  
And breaks the spreading of its *golden tides* ;  
And now that orb has touched the purple  
steep

Whose softened image penetrates the deep.  
'Cross the calm lake's blue shades the cliffs  
aspire,

With towers and woods, a "prospect all on  
fire ;"

While coves and secret hollows, through a  
ray

Of fainter gold, a purple gleam betray.  
Each slip of lawn the broken rocks between  
Shines in the light with more than earthly  
green :

Deep yellow beams the scattered stems  
illumine,

Far in the level forest's central gloom :  
Waving his hat, the shepherd, from the  
vale,

Directs his winding dog the cliffs to scale,—  
The dog, loud barking, 'mid the glittering  
rocks,

Hunts, where his master points, the inter-  
cepted flocks.

Where oaks o'erhang the road the radiance  
shoots

On tawny earth, wild weeds, and twisted  
roots ;

The druid-stones a brightened ring unfold ;  
And all the babbling brooks are liquid  
gold ;

Sunk to a curve, the day-star lessens still,

Gives one bright glance, and drops behind  
the hill.<sup>1</sup>

In these secluded vales, if village fame,  
Confirmed by hoary hairs, belief may claim ;  
When up the hills, as now, retired the  
light,

Strange apparitions mocked the shepherd's  
sight.

The form appears of one that spurs his  
steed

Midway along the hill with desperate speed ;  
Unhurt pursues his lengthened flight, while  
all

Attend, at every stretch, his headlong fall.  
Anon, appears a brave, a gorgeous show  
Of horsemen-shadows moving to and fro ;  
At intervals imperial banners stream,  
And now the van reflects the solar beam ;  
The rear through iron brown betrays a  
sullen gleam.

While silent stands the admiring crowd  
below,

Silent the visionary warriors go,  
Winding in ordered pomp their upward  
way.<sup>2</sup>

Till the last banner of the long array  
Has disappeared, and every trace is fled  
Of splendour—save the beacon's spiry head  
Tipt with eve's latest gleam of burning red.

Now, while the solemn evening shadows  
sail,

On slowly-waving pinions, down the vale ;  
And, fronting the bright west, yon oak  
entwines

Its darkening boughs and leaves, in stronger  
lines ;

'Tis pleasant near the tranquil lake to stray  
Where, winding on along some secret bay,  
The swan uplifts his chest, and backward  
flings

His neck, a varying arch, between his  
towering wings :

The eye that marks the gliding creature sees  
How graceful, pride can be, and how mag-  
jestic, ease.

While tender cares and mild domestic loves  
With furtive watch pursue her as she moves,  
The female with a meeker charm succeeds,  
And her brown little-ones around her leads,

<sup>1</sup> From Thomson.

<sup>2</sup> See a description of an appearance of this  
kind in Clark's Survey of the Lakes, accompanied  
by vouchers of its veracity, that may amuse the  
reader.

## SWANS

Nibbling the water lilies as they pass,  
Or playing wanton with the floating grass.  
She, in a mother's care, her beauty's pride  
Forgetting, calls the wearied to her side ;  
Alternately they mount her back, and rest  
Close by her mantling wings' embraces  
prest.

Long may they float upon this flood  
serene ;

Theirs be these holms untrodden, still, and  
green,

Where leafy shades fence off the blustering  
gale,

And breathes in peace the lily of the vale !  
Yon isle, which feels not even the milk-  
maid's feet,

Yet hears her song, "by distance made  
more sweet,"

Yon isle conceals their home, their hut-like  
bower ;

Green water-rushes overspread the floor ;  
Long grass and willows form the woven wall,  
And swings above the roof the poplar tall.  
Thence issuing often with unwieldy stalk,  
They crush with broad black feet their  
flowery walk ;

Or, from the neighbouring water, hear at  
morn

The hound, the horse's tread, and mellow  
horn ;

Involve their serpent-necks in changeful  
rings,

Rolled wantonly between their slippery  
wings,

Or, starting up with noise and rude delight,  
Force half upon the wave their cumbrous  
flight.

Fair Swan ! by all a mother's joys car-  
ressed,

Haply some wretch has eyed, and called  
thee blessed ;

When with her infants, from some shady seat  
By the lake's edge, she rose—to face the  
noontide heat ;

Or taught their limbs along the dusty road  
A few short steps to totter with their load.

I see her now, denied to lay her head,  
On cold blue nights, in hut or straw-built  
shed,

Turn to a silent smile their sleepy cry,  
By pointing to the gliding moon on high.

—When low-hung clouds each star of  
summer hide,

And fireless are the valleys far and wide,

Where the brook brawls along the public  
road  
Dark with bat-haunted ashes stretching  
broad,  
Oft has she taught them on her lap to lay  
The shining glow-worm ; or, in heedless  
play,  
Toss it from hand to hand, disquieted ;  
While others, not unseen, are free to shed  
Green unmolested light upon their mossy  
bed.

Oh ! when the sleety showers her path  
assail,  
And like a torrent roars the headstrong  
gale ;  
No more her breath can thaw their fingers  
cold,  
Their frozen arms her neck no more can  
fold ;  
Weak roof a cowering form two babes to  
shield,  
And faint the fire a dying heart can yield !  
Press the sad kiss, fond mother ! vainly  
fears  
Thy flooded cheek to wet them with its  
tears ;  
No tears can chill them, and no bosom  
warms,  
Thy breast their death-bed, confined in  
thine arms !

~~Sweet are the sounds that mingle from  
afar,  
Heard by calm lakes, as peeps the folding  
star,  
Where the duck dabbles 'mid the rustling  
sedge,  
And feeding pike starts from the water's  
edge,  
Or the swan stirs the reeds, his neck and  
bill  
Wetting, that drip upon the water still ;  
And heron, as resounds the trodden shore,  
Shoots upward, darting his long neck be-  
fore.~~

Now, with religious awe, the farewell  
light  
Blends with the solemn colouring of night ;  
'Mid groves of clouds that crest the moun-  
tain's brow,  
And round the west's proud lodge their  
shadows throw,  
Like ~~Una~~ shining on her gloomy way,  
The half-seen form of Twilight roams  
astray ;

Shedding, through paly loop-holes mild and  
small,  
Gleams that upon the lake's still bosom  
fall ;

Soft o'er the surface creep those lustres pale  
Tracking the motions of the fitful gale.  
With restless interchange at once the bright  
Wins on the shade, the shade upon the  
light.

No favoured eye was e'er allowed to gaze  
On lovelier spectacle in faery days ;  
When gentle Spirits urged a sportive chase,  
Brushing with lucid wands the water's  
face :

While music, stealing round the glimmer-  
ing deeps,  
Charmed the tall circle of the enchanted  
steeps.

—The lights are vanished from the watery  
plains :

No wreck of all the pageantry remains.  
Unheeded night has overcome the vales ;  
On the dark earth the wearied vision fails ;  
The latest lingerer of the forest train,  
The lone black fir, forsakes the faded  
plain ;

Last evening sight, the cottage smoke, no  
more,

Lost in the thickened darkness, glimmers  
hoar ;

And, towering from the sullen dark-brown  
mere,

Like a black wall, the mountain-steeps ap-  
pear.

—Now o'er the soothed accordant heart we  
feel

A sympathetic twilight slowly steal,  
And ever, as we fondly muse, we find  
The soft gloom deepening on the tranquil  
mind.

Stay ! pensive, sadly-pleasing visions, stay !  
Ah no ! as fades the vale, they fade away :  
Yet still the tender, vacant gloom remains ;  
Still the cold cheek its shuddering tear re-  
tains.

The bird, who ceased, with fading light,  
to thread

Silent the hedge or steamy rivulet's bed,  
From his grey re-appearing tower shall soon  
Salute with glad some note the rising moon,  
While with a hoary light she frosts the  
ground,

And pours a deeper blue to Æther's  
bound ;

*Spencer's Truth*

Pleased, as she moves, her pomp of clouds  
to fold

In robes of azure, fleecy-white, and gold.

Above yon eastern hill, where darkness  
broods

O'er all its vanished dells, and lawns, and  
woods ;

Where but a mass of shade the sight can  
trace,

Even now she shews, half-veiled, her lovely  
face :

Across the gloomy valley flings her light,

Far to the western slopes with hamlets  
white ;

And gives, where woods the chequered up-  
land strew,

To the green corn of summer, autumn's hue.

Thus Hope, first pouring from her  
blessed horn

Her dawn, far lovelier than the moon's own  
morn,

Till higher mounted, strives in vain to cheer  
The weary hills, impervious, blackening  
near ;

Yet does she still, undaunted, throw the  
while

On darling spots remote her tempting smile.

Even now she decks for me a distant  
scene,

(For dark and broad the gulf of time be-  
tween)

Gilding that cottage with her fondest ray,  
(Sole bourn, sole wish, sole object of my  
way ;

How fair its lawns and sheltering woods  
appear !

How sweet its streamlet murmurs in mine  
ear !)

Where we, my Friend, to happy days shall  
rise,

Till our small share of hardly-paining sighs  
(For sighs will ever trouble human breath)

Creep hushed into the tranquil breast of  
death.

But now the clear bright Moon her  
zenith gains,

And, rimy without speck, extend the plains :  
The deepest cleft the mountain's front dis-  
plays

Scarce hides a shadow from her searching  
rays ;

From the dark-blue faint silvery threads  
divide

The hills, while gleams below the azure tide ;

Time softly treads ; throughout the land-  
scape breathes

A peace enlivened, not disturbed, by  
wreaths

Of charcoal-smoke, that o'er the fallen  
wood,

Steal down the hill, and spread along the  
flood.

The song of mountain-streams, unheard  
by day,

Now hardly heard, beguiles my homeward  
way.

Air listens, like the sleeping water, still,

To catch the spiritual music of the hill,  
Broke only by the slow clock tolling deep,

Or shout that wakes the ferry-man from  
sleep,

The echoed hoof nearing the distant  
shore,

The boat's first motion—made with dashing  
oar ;

Sound of closed gate, across the water  
borne,

Hurrying the timid hare through rustling  
corn ;

The sportive outcry of the mocking owl ;

And at long intervals the mill-dog's howl ;

The distant forge's swinging thump pro-  
found ;

Or yell, in the deep woods, of lonely hound.

1787, 8, & 9.

## LINES

### WRITTEN WHILE SAILING IN A BOAT AT EVENING

This title is scarcely correct. It was during a  
solitary walk on the banks of the Cam that I was  
first struck with this appearance, and applied  
it to my own feelings in the manner here  
expressed, changing the scene to the Thames,  
near Windsor. This, and the three stanzas of  
the following poem, "Remembrance of Collins,"  
formed one piece ; but, upon the recommenda-  
tion of Coleridge, the three last stanzas were  
separated from the other.

How richly glows the water's breast  
Before us, tinged with evening hues,  
While, facing thus the crimson west,  
The boat her silent course pursues !  
And see how dark the backward stream !  
A little moment past so smiling !

And still, perhaps, with faithless gleam,  
Some other loiterers beguiling.

Such views the youthful Bard allure ;  
But, heedless of the following gloom,  
He deems their colours shall endure  
Till peace go with him to the tomb.  
—And let him nurse his fond deceit,  
And what if he must die in sorrow !  
Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,  
Though grief and pain may come to-mor-  
row? 1789.

### REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS

COMPOSED UPON THE THAMES NEAR  
RICHMOND

GLIDE gently, thus for ever glide,  
O Thames ! that other bards may see  
As lovely visions by thy side  
As now, fair river ! come to me.  
O glide, fair stream ! for ever so,  
Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,  
Till all our minds for ever flow  
As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought !—Yet be as now thou art,  
That in thy waters may be seen  
The image of a poet's heart,  
How bright, how solemn, how serene !  
Such as did once the Poet bless,  
Who murmuring here a later<sup>1</sup> ditty,  
Could find no refuge from distress  
But in the milder grief of pity.

Now let us, as we float along,  
For *him* suspend the dashing oar ;  
And pray that never child of song  
May know that Poet's sorrows more.  
How calm ! how still ! the only sound,  
The dripping of the oar suspended !  
—The evening darkness gathers round  
By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

1789.

<sup>1</sup> Collins's Ode on the death of Thomson, the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his life-time. This Ode is also alluded to in the next stanza.

### DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES

TAKEN DURING A PEDESTRIAN TOUR  
AMONG THE ALPS

Much the greatest part of this poem was composed during my walks upon the banks of the Loire in the years 1791, 1792. I will only notice that the description of the valley filled with mist, beginning—"In solemn shapes," was taken from that beautiful region of which the principal features are Lungarn and Sarnen. Nothing that I ever saw in nature left a more delightful impression on my mind than that which I have attempted, alas ! how feebly, to convey to others in these lines. Those two lakes have always interested me especially, from bearing, in their size and other features, a resemblance to those of the North of England. It is much to be deplored that a district so beautiful should be so unhealthy as it is.

TO

THE REV. ROBERT JONES,

FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

DEAR SIR,

However desirous I might have been of giving you proofs of the high place you hold in my esteem, I should have been cautious of wounding your delicacy by thus publicly addressing you, had not the circumstance of our having been companions among the Alps, seemed to give this dedication a propriety sufficient to do away any scruples which your modesty might otherwise have suggested.

In inscribing this little work to you, I consult my heart. You know well how great is the difference between two companions lolling in a post-chaise, and two travellers plodding slowly along the road, side by side, each with his little knapsack of necessities upon his shoulders. How much more of heart between the two latter !

I am happy in being conscious that I shall have one reader who will approach the conclusion of these few pages with regret. You they must certainly interest, in reminding you of moments to which you can hardly look back without a pleasure not the less dear from a shade of melancholy. You will meet with few images without recollecting the spot where we observed them together ; consequently, whatever is feeble in my design, or spiritless in my colouring, will be amply supplied by your own memory.

With still greater propriety I might have inscribed to you a description of some of the features of your native mountains, through which we have wandered together, in the same manner, with so much pleasure. But the sea-sunsets, which give

such splendour to the vale of Clwyd, Snowdon, the chair of Idris, the quiet village of Bethgelyert, Menai and her Druids, the Alpine steep of the Conway, and the still more interesting windings of the wizard stream of the Dee, remain yet untouched. Apprehensive that my pencil may never be exercised on these subjects, I cannot let slip this opportunity of thus publicly assuring you with how much affection and esteem

I am, dear Sir,

Most sincerely yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.

*London, 1793.*

Happiness (if she had been to be found on earth) among the charms of Nature—Pleasures of the pedestrian Traveller—Author crosses France to the Alps—Present state of the Grande Chartreuse—Lake of Como—Time, Sunset—Same Scene, Twilight—Same Scene, Morning; its voluptuous Character; Old man and forest-cottage music—River Tusa—Via Mala and Grison Gipsy—Sckellenen-thal—Lake of Uri—Stormy sunset—Chapel of William Tell—Force of local emotion—Chamois-chaser—View of the higher Alps—Manner of life of a Swiss mountaineer, interspersed with views of the higher Alps—Golden age of the Alps—Life and views continued—Ranz des Vaches, famous Swiss Air—Abbey of Einsiedlen and its pilgrims—Valley of Chamouny—Mont Blanc—Slavery of Savoy—Influence of liberty on cottage-happiness—France—Wish for the Extirpation of slavery—Conclusion.

WERE there, below, a spot of holy ground  
Where from distress a refuge might be found,

And solitude prepare the soul for heaven;  
Sure, nature's God that spot to man had given

Where falls the purple morning far and wide  
In flakes of light upon the mountain side;  
Where with loud voice the power of water shakes

The leafy wood, or sleeps in quiet lakes.

Yet not unrecompensed the man shall roam,

Who at the call of summer quits his home,  
And plods through some wide realm o'er vale and height,

Though seeking only holiday delight;  
At least, not owing to himself an aim  
To which the sage would give a prouder name.

No gains too cheaply earned his fancy cloy,  
Though every passing zephyr whispers joy;

Brisk toil, alternating with ready ease,  
Feeds the clear current of his sympathies.  
For him sod-seats the cottage-door adorn;  
And peeps the far-off spire, his evening bourn!

Dear is the forest frowning o'er his head,  
And dear the velvet green-sward to his tread:

Moves there a cloud o'er mid-day's flaming eye?

Upward he looks—"and calls it luxury:"  
Kind Nature's charities his steps attend;  
In every babbling brook he finds a friend;  
While chastening thoughts of sweetest use, bestowed

By wisdom, moralise his pensive road.

Host of his welcome inn, the noon-tide bower,

To his spare meal he calls the passing poor;  
He views the sun uplift his golden fire,  
Or sink, with heart alive like Memnon's lyre;<sup>1</sup>

Blesses the moon that comes with kindly ray,

To light him shaken by his rugged way.  
Back from his sight no bashful children steal;

He sits a brother at the cottage-meal;  
His humble looks no shy restraint impart;  
Around him plays at will the virgin heart.  
While unsuspended wheels the village dance,  
The maidens eye him with enquiring glance,  
Much wondering by what fit of crazing care,  
Or desperate love, bewildered, he came there.

A hope, that prudence could not then approve,

That clung to Nature with a truant's love,  
O'er Gallia's wastes of corn my footsteps led;  
Her files of road-elms, high above my head  
In long-drawn vista, rustling in the breeze;  
Or where her pathways straggle as they please

By lonely farms and secret villages.

But lo! the Alps ascending white in air,  
Toy with the sun and glitter from afar.

And now, emerging from the forest's gloom,

I greet thee, Chartreuse, while I mourn thy doom.

<sup>1</sup> The lyre of Memnon is reported to have emitted melancholy or cheerful tones, as it was touched by the sun's evening or morning rays.



Whither is fled that Power whose frown  
severe

Awed sober Reason till she crouched in fear?  
*That* Silence, once in deathlike fetters  
bound,

Chains that were loosened only by the sound  
Of holy rites chanted in measured round?  
—The voice of blasphemy the fane alarms,  
The cloister startles at the gleam of arms.  
The thundering tube the aged angler hears,  
Bent o'er the groaning flood that sweeps  
away his tears.

Cloud-piercing pine-trees nod their troubled  
heads,

Spires, rocks, and lawns a browner night  
o'erspreads ;

Strong terror checks the female peasant's  
sighs,

And start the astonished shades at female  
eyes.

From Bruno's forest screams the affrighted  
jay,

And slow the insulted eagle wheels away.  
A viewless flight of laughing Demons mock  
The Cross, by angels planted<sup>1</sup> on the  
aërial rock.

The "parting Genius" sighs with hollow  
breath

Along the mystic streams of Life and  
Death.<sup>2</sup>

Swelling the outcry dull, that long resounds  
Portentous through her old woods' trackless  
bounds,

Vallombre,<sup>3</sup> mid her falling fanes, deplores,  
For ever broke, the sabbath of her bowers.

More pleased, my foot the hidden margin  
roves

Of Como, bosomed deep in chestnut groves.  
No meadows thrown between, the giddy  
steeps

Tower, bare or sylvan, from the narrow  
deeps.

—To towns, whose shades of no rude noise  
complain,

From ringing team apart and grating  
wain—

To flat-roofed towns, that touch the water's  
bound,

Or lurk in woody sunless glens profound,

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to crosses seen on the tops of the  
spiry rocks of Chartreuse, which have every  
appearance of being inaccessible.

<sup>2</sup> Names of rivers at the Chartreuse.

<sup>3</sup> Name of one of the valleys of the Chartreuse.

Or, from the bending rocks, obtrusive cling,  
And o'er the whitened wave their shadows  
fling—

The pathway leads, as round the steeps it  
twines ;

And Silence loves its purple roof of vines.  
The loitering traveller hence, at evening, sees  
From rock-hewn steps the sail between the  
trees ;

Or marks, 'mid opening cliffs, fair dark-  
eyed maids

Tend the small harvest of their garden  
glades ;

Or stops the solemn mountain-shades to view  
Stretch o'er the pictured mirror broad and  
blue,

And track the yellow lights from steep to  
steep,

As up the opposing hills they slowly creep.  
Aloft, here, half a village shines, arrayed  
In golden light ; half hides itself in shade :  
While, from amid the darkened roofs, the  
spire,

Restlessly flashing, seems to mount like fire :  
There, all unshaded, blazing forests throw  
Rich golden verdure on the lake below.  
Slow glides the sail along the illumined shore,  
And steals into the shade the lazy oar ;  
Soft bosoms breathe around contagious  
sighs,

And amorous music on the water dies.

How blest, delicious scene ! the eye that  
greet

Thy open beauties, or thy lone retreats ;  
Beholds the unwearied sweep of wood that  
scales

Thy cliffs ; the endless waters of thy vales ;  
Thy lowly cots that sprinkle all the shore,  
Each with its household boat beside the  
door ;

Thy torrents shooting from the clear-blue  
sky ;

Thy towns, that cleave, like swallows'  
nests, on high ;

That glimmer hoar in eve's last light,  
descried

Dim from the twilight water's shaggy side,  
Whence lutes and voices down the en-  
chanted woods

Steal, and compose the oar-forgotten floods ;  
Thy lake, that, streaked or dappled, blue  
or grey,

'Mid smoking woods gleams hid from  
morning's ray

Slow-travelling down the western hills, to  
enfold

Its green-tinged margin in a blaze of gold ;  
Thy glittering steeples, whence the matin  
bell

Calls forth the woodman from his desert cell,  
And quickens the blithe sound of oars that  
pass

Along the steaming lake, to early mass.  
But now farewell to each and all—adieu  
To every charm, and last and chief to you,  
Ye lovely maidens that in noontide shade  
Rest near your little plots of wheaten glade ;  
To all that binds the soul in powerless  
trance,

Lip-dewing song, and ringlet-tossing  
dance ;

Where sparkling eyes and breaking smiles  
illuminate

The sylvan cabin's lute-enlivened gloom.  
—Alas ! the very murmur of the streams  
Breathes o'er the failing soul voluptuous  
dreams,

While Slavery, forcing the sunk mind to  
dwell

On joys that might disgrace the captive's  
cell,

Her shameless timbrel shakes on Como's  
marge,

And lures from bay to bay the vocal barge.  
Yet are thy softer arts with power indued  
To soothe and cheer the poor man's soli-  
tude.

By silent cottage-doors, the peasant's home  
Left vacant for the day, I loved to roam.

But once I pierced the mazes of a wood  
In which a cabin undeserted stood ;

There an old man an olden measure scanned  
On a rude viol touched with withered hand.  
As lambs or fawns in April clustering lie  
Under a hoary oak's thin canopy,  
Stretched at his feet, with stedfast upward  
eye,

His children's children listened to the  
sound ;

—A Hermit with his family around !

But let us hence ; for fair Locarno smiles  
Embowered in walnut slopes and citron  
isles :

Or seek at eve the banks of Tusa's stream,  
Where, 'mid dim towers and woods, her<sup>1</sup>  
waters gleam.

<sup>1</sup> The river along whose banks you descend in  
crossing the Alps by the Simplon Pass.

From the bright wave, in solemn gloom,  
retire

The dull-red steepes, and, darkening still,  
aspire

To where afar rich orange lustres glow  
Round undistinguished clouds, and rocks,  
and snow :

Or, led where Via Mala's chasms confine  
The indignant waters of the infant Rhine,  
Hang o'er the abyss, whose else impervious  
gloom

His burning eyes with fearful light illumine,  
The mind condemned, without reprieve,  
to go

O'er life's long deserts with its charge of  
woe,

With sad congratulation joins the train  
Where beasts and men together o'er the  
plain

Move on—a mighty caravan of pain :  
Hope, strength, and courage, social suffer-  
ing brings,

Freshening the wilderness with shades and  
springs.

—There be whose lot far otherwise is cast :  
Sole human tenant of the piny waste,  
By choice or doom a gipsy wanders here,  
A nursing babe her only comforter ;  
Lo, where she sits beneath yon shaggy  
rock,

A cowering shape half hid in curling  
smoke !

When lightning among clouds and  
mountain-snows

Predominates, and darkness comes and  
goes,

And the fierce torrent, at the flashes broad  
Starts, like a horse, beside the glaring  
road—

She seeks a covert from the battering  
shower

In the roofed bridge ;<sup>2</sup> the bridge, in that  
dread hour,

Itself all trembling at the torrent's power.

Nor is she more at ease on some *still*  
night,

When not a star supplies the comfort of its  
light ;

Only the waning moon hangs dull and red  
Above a melancholy mountain's head,

<sup>2</sup> Most of the bridges among the Alps are of  
wood, and covered : these bridges have a heavy  
appearance, and rather injure the effect of the  
scenery in some places.

Then sets. In total gloom the Vagrant  
sighs,

Stoops her sick head, and shuts her weary  
eyes ; -

Or on her fingers counts the distant clock,  
Or, to the drowsy crow of midnight cock,  
Listens, or quakes while from the forest's  
gulf

Howls near and nearer yet the famished  
wolf.

From the green vale of Urseren smooth  
and wide

Descend we now, the maddened Reuss our  
guide ;

By rocks that, shutting out the blessed day,  
Cling tremblingly to rocks as loose as they ;  
By cells<sup>1</sup> upon whose image, while he  
prays,

The kneeling peasant scarcely dares to  
gaze ;

By many a votive death-cross<sup>2</sup> planted  
near,

And watered duly with the pious tear,  
That faded silent from the upward eye  
Unmoved with each rude form of peril nigh ;  
Fixed on the anchor left by Him who saves  
Alike in whelming snows, and roaring  
waves.

But soon a peopled region on the sight  
Opens—a little world of calm delight ;  
Where mists, suspended on the expiring  
gale,

Spread rooflike o'er the deep secluded vale,  
And beams of evening slipping in between,  
Gently illuminate a sober scene :—

Here, on the brown wood-cottages<sup>3</sup> they  
sleep,

There, over rock or sloping pasture creep.  
On as we journey, in clear view displayed,  
The still vale lengthens underneath its  
shade

Of low-hung vapour : on the freshened  
mead

The green light sparkles ;—the dim bowers  
recede.

<sup>1</sup> The Catholic religion prevails here : these cells are, as is well known, very common in the Catholic countries, planted, like the Roman tombs, along the road side.

<sup>2</sup> Crosses, commemorative of the deaths of travellers by the fall of snow, and other accidents, are very common along this dreadful road.

<sup>3</sup> The houses in the more retired Swiss valleys are all built of wood.

While pastoral pipes and streams the land-  
scape lull,

And bells of passing mules that tinkle dull,  
In solemn shapes before the admiring eye  
Dilated hang the misty pines on high,  
Huge convent domes with pinnacles and  
towers,

And antique castles seen through gleamy  
showers.

From such romantic dreams, my soul,  
awake !

To sterner pleasure, where, by Uri's lake  
In Nature's pristine majesty outspread,  
Winds neither road nor path for foot to  
tread :

The rocks rise naked as a wall, or stretch  
Far o'er the water, hung with groves of  
beech ;

Aërial pines from loftier steeps ascend,  
Nor stop but where creation seems to end.  
Yet here and there, if mid the savage scene  
Appears a scanty plot of smiling green,  
Up from the lake a zigzag path will creep  
To reach a small wood-hut hung boldly on  
the steep,

—Before those thresholds (never can they  
know

The face of traveller passing to and fro,)  
No peasant leans upon his pole, to tell  
For whom at morning tolled the funeral  
bell ;

Their watch-dog ne'er his angry bark fore-  
goes,

Touched by the beggar's moan of human  
woes ;

The shady porch ne'er offered a cool seat  
To pilgrims overcome by summer's heat.  
Yet thither the world's business finds its way  
At times, and tales unsought beguile the  
day,

And *there* are those fond thoughts which  
Solitude,

However stern, is powerless to exclude.  
There doth the maiden watch her lover's  
sail

Approaching, and upbraid the tardy gale ;  
At midnight listens till his parting oar,  
And its last echo, can be heard no more.

And what if ospreys, cormorants, herons,  
cry

Amid tempestuous vapours driving by,  
Or hovering over wastes too bleak to rear  
That common growth of earth, the foodful  
ear ;

Where the green apple shrivels on the spray,  
And pines the unripened pear in summer's  
kindest ray ;

Contentment shares the desolate domain  
With Independence, child of high Disdain.  
Exulting 'mid the winter of the skies,  
Shy as the jealous chamois, Freedom flies,  
And grasps by fits her sword, and often  
eyes ;

And sometimes, as from rock to rock she  
bounds

The Patriot nymph starts at imagined  
sounds,

And, wildly pausing, oft she hangs aghast,  
Whether some old Swiss air hath checked  
her haste

Or thrill of Spartan life is caught between  
the blast.

Swola with incessant rains from hour to  
hour,

All day the floods a deepening murmur  
pour :

The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight :  
Dark is the region as with coming night ;  
But what a sudden burst of overpowering  
light !

Triumphphant on the bosom of the storm,  
Glances the wheeling eagle's glorious form !  
Eastward, in long perspective glittering,  
shine

The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake  
recline ;

Those lofty cliffs a hundred streams un-  
fold,

At once to pillars turned that flame with  
gold :

Behind his sail the peasant shrinks, to shun  
The *west*, that burns like one dilated sun,  
A crucible of mighty compass, felt  
By mountains, glowing till they seem to  
melt.

But, lo ! the boatman, overawed, before  
The pictured fane of Tell suspends his  
oar ;

Confused the Marathonian tale appears,  
While his eyes sparkle with heroic tears.  
And who, that walks where men of ancient  
days

Have wrought with godlike arm the deeds  
of praise,

Feels not the spirit of the place control,  
Or rouse and agitate his labouring soul ?  
Say, who, by thinking on Canadian hills,  
Or wild Aosta lulled by Alpine rills,

On Zutphen's plain ; or on that highland  
dell,

Through which rough Garry cleaves his  
way, can tell

What high resolves exalt the tenderest  
thought

Of him whom passion rivets to the spot,  
Where breathed the gale that caught Wolfe's  
happiest sigh,

And the last sunbeam fell on Bayard's eye ;  
Where bleeding Sidney from the cup retired,  
And glad Dundee in "faint huzzas" expired ?

But now with other mind I stand alone  
Upon the summit of this naked cone,  
And watch the fearless chamois-hunter chase  
His prey, through tracts abrupt of desolate  
space,

<sup>1</sup> Through vacant worlds where Nature  
never gave

A brook to murmur or a bough to wave,  
Which unsubstantial Phantom sacred keep ;  
Thro' worlds where Life, and Voice, and  
Motion sleep ;

Where silent Hours their deathlike sway  
extend,

Save when the avalanche breaks loose, to  
rend

Its way with uproar, till the ruin, drowned  
In some dense wood or gulf of snow pro-  
found,

Mocks the dull ear of Time with deaf  
abortive sound.

—'Tis his, while wandering on from height  
to height,

To see a planet's pomp and steady light  
In the least star of scarce-appearing night ;  
While the pale moon moves near him, on  
the bound

Of ether, shining with diminished round,  
And far and wide the icy summits blaze,  
Rejoicing in the glory of her rays :

To him the day-star glitters small and  
bright,

Shorn of its beams, insufferably white,  
And he can look beyond the sun, and view  
Those fast-receding depths of sable blue  
Flying till vision can no more pursue !

—At once bewildering mists around him  
close,

And cold and hunger are his least of woes ;

<sup>1</sup> For most of the images in the next sixteen  
verses, I am indebted to M. Raymond's interest-  
ing observations annexed to his translation of  
Coxe's *Tour in Switzerland*.

The Demon of the snow, with angry roar  
Descending, shuts for aye his prison door.  
Soon with despair's whole weight his spirits  
sink ;

Bread has he none, the snow must be his  
drink ;

And, ere his eyes can close upon the day,  
The eagle of the Alps o'ershades her prey.

Now couch thyself where, heard with fear  
afar,

Thunders through echoing pines the head-  
long Aar ;

Or rather stay to taste the mild delights  
Of pensive Underwalden's<sup>1</sup> pastoral  
heights.

—Is there who 'mid these awful wilds has  
seen

The native Genii walk the mountain green?  
Or heard, while other worlds their charms  
reveal,

Soft music o'er the ærial summit steal?  
While o'er the desert, answering every close,  
Rich steam of sweetest perfume comes and  
goes.

—And sure there is a secret Power that  
reigns

Here, where no trace of man the spot  
profanes,

Nought but the *chalets*,<sup>2</sup> flat and bare, on  
high

Suspended 'mid the quiet of the sky ;  
Or distant herds that pasturing upward  
creep,

And, not untended, climb the dangerous  
steep.

How still ! no irreligious sound or sight  
Rouses the soul from her severe delight.  
An idle voice the sabbath region fills  
Of Deep that calls to Deep across the hills,  
And with that voice accords the soothing  
sound

Of drowsy bells, for ever tinkling round ;  
Faint wail of eagle melting into blue  
Beneath the cliffs, and pine-woods' steady  
*sugh* ;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The people of this Canton are supposed to be of a more melancholy disposition than the other inhabitants of the Alps ; this, if true, may proceed from their living more secluded.

<sup>2</sup> This picture is from the middle region of the Alps. *Chalets* are summer huts for the Swiss herdsmen.

<sup>3</sup> *Sugh*, a Scotch word expressive of the sound of the wind through the trees.

The solitary heifer's deepened low ;  
Or rumbling, heard remote, of falling snow.  
All motions, sounds, and voices, far and  
nigh,

Blend in a music of tranquillity ;  
Save when, a stranger seen below, the boy  
Shouts from the echoing hills with savage  
joy.

When, from the sunny breast of open  
scas,

And bays with myrtle fringed, the southern  
breeze

Comes on to gladden April with the sight  
Of green isles widening on each snow-clad  
height ;

When shouts and lowing herds the valley  
fill,

And louder torrents stun the noon-tide hill,  
The pastoral Swiss begin the cliffs to scale,  
Leaving to silence the deserted vale ;

And like the Patriarchs in their simple age  
Move, as the verdure leads, from stage to  
stage :

High and more high in summer's heat they  
go,

And hear the rattling thunder far below ;  
Or steal beneath the mountains, half-de-  
terred,

Where huge rocks tremble to the bellowing  
herd.

One I behold who, 'cross the foaming  
flood,

Leaps with a bound of graceful hardihood ;  
Another, high on that green ledge ;—he  
gained

The tempting spot with every sinew strained ;  
And downward thence a knot of grass he  
throws,

Food for his beasts in time of winter snows.  
—Far different life from what Tradition  
hoar

Transmits of happier lot in times of yore !  
Then Summer lingered long ; and honey  
flowed

From out the rocks, the wild bees' safe  
abode :

Continual waters welling cheered the waste,  
And plants were wholesome, now of deadly  
taste :

Nor Winter yet his frozen stores had piled,  
Usurping where the fairest herbage smiled :  
Nor Hunger driven the herds from pastures  
bare,

To climb the treacherous cliffs for scanty fare.

Then the milk-thistle flourished through  
the land,  
And forced the full-swoln udder to demand,  
Thrice every day, the pail and welcome  
hand.

Thus does the father to his children tell  
Of banished bliss, by fancy loved too well.  
Alas ! that human guilt provoked the rod  
Of angry Nature to avenge her God.  
Still, Nature, ever just, to him imparts  
Joys only given to uncorrupted hearts.

"Tis morn : with gold the verdant moun-  
tain glows

More high, the snowy peaks with hues of  
rose.

Far-stretched beneath the many-tinted hills,  
A mighty waste of mist the valley fills,  
A solemn sea ! whose billows wide around  
Stand motionless, to awful silence bound :  
Pines, on the coast, through mist their tops  
uprear,

That like to leaning masts of stranded ships  
appear.

A single chasm, a gulf of gloomy blue,  
Gapes in the centre of the sea—and, through  
That dark mysterious gulf ascending, sound  
Innumerable streams with roar profound.  
Mount through the nearer vapours notes of  
birds,

And merry flageolet ; the low of herds,  
The bark of dogs, the heifer's tinkling bell,  
Talk, laughter, and perchance a church-  
tower knell :

Think not, the peasant from aloft has gazed  
And heard with heart unmoved, with soul  
unraised :

Nor is his spirit less enrapt, nor less  
Alive to independent happiness,  
Then, when he lies, out-stretched, at even-  
tide

Upon the fragrant mountain's purple side :  
For as the pleasures of his simple day  
Beyond his native valley seldom stray,  
Nought round its darling precincts can he  
find

But brings some past enjoyment to his  
mind ;

While Hope, reclining upon Pleasure's  
urn,  
Binds her wild wreaths, and whispers his  
return.

Once, Man entirely free, alone and wild,  
Was blest as free—for he was Nature's  
child.

He, all superior but his God disdained,  
Walked none restraining, and by none re-  
strained

Confessed no law but what his reason  
taught,

Did all he wished, and wished but what he  
ought.

As man in his primeval dower arrayed  
The image of his glorious Sire displayed,  
Even so, by faithful Nature guarded, here  
The traces of primeval Man appear ;  
The simple dignity no forms debase ;  
The eye sublime, and surly lion-grace :  
The slave of none, of beasts alone the  
lord,

His book he prizes, nor neglects his sword ;  
Well taught by that to feel his rights, pre-  
pared

With this "the blessings he enjoys to  
guard."

And, as his native hills encircle ground  
For many a marvellous victory renowned,  
The work of Freedom daring to oppose,  
With few in arms,<sup>1</sup> innumerable foes,  
When to those famous fields his steps are  
led,

An unknown power connects him with the  
dead :

For images of other worlds are there ;  
Awful the light, and holy is the air.  
Fitfully, and in flashes, through his soul,  
Like sun-lit tempests, troubled transports  
roll ;

His bosom heaves, his Spirit towers amain,  
Beyond the senses and their little reign.

And oft, when that dread vision hath  
past by,

He holds with God himself communion  
high,

There where the peal of swelling torrents  
fills

The sky-roofed temple of the eternal hills ;

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to several battles which the Swiss  
in very small numbers have gained over their  
oppressors, the house of Austria ; and in parti-  
cular, to one fought at Næfels near Glarus,  
where three hundred and thirty men are said to  
have defeated an army of between fifteen and  
twenty thousand Austrians. Scattered over the  
valley are to be found eleven stones, with this in-  
scription, 1388, the year the battle was fought,  
marking out, as I was told upon the spot, the  
several places where the Austrians, attempting to  
make a stand, were repulsed anew.

Or when, upon the mountain's silent brow  
 Reclined, he sees, above him and below,  
 Bright stars of ice and azure fields of snow ;  
 While needle peaks of granite shooting bare  
 Tremble in ever-varying tints of air.

And when a gathering weight of shadows  
 brown

Falls on the valleys as the sun goes down ;  
 And Pikes, of darkness named and fear and  
 storms,<sup>1</sup>

Uplift in quiet their illumined forms,  
 In sea-like reach of prospect round him  
 spread,

Tinged like an angel's smile all rosy red—  
 Awe in his breast with holiest love unites,  
 And the near heavens impart their own de-  
 lights.

When downward to his winter hut he  
 goes,  
 Dear and more dear the lessening circle  
 grows ;

That hut which on the hills so oft employs  
 His thoughts, the central point of all his  
 joys.

And as a swallow, at the hour of rest,  
 Peeps often ere she darts into her nest,  
 So to the homestead, where the grandsire  
 tends

A little prattling child, he oft descends,  
 To glance a look upon the well-matched  
 pair ;

Till storm and driving ice blockade him  
 there.

There, safely guarded by the woods behind,  
 He hears the chiding of the baffled wind,  
 Hears Winter calling all his terrors round,  
 And, blest within himself, he shrinks not  
 from the sound.

Through Nature's vale his homely plea-  
 sures glide,

Unstained by envy, discontent, and pride ;  
 The bound of all his vanity, to deck,  
 With one bright bell, a favourite heifer's  
 neck ;

Well pleased upon some simple annual  
 feast,

Remembered half the year and hoped the  
 rest,

If dairy-produce, from his inner hoard,  
 Of thrice ten summers dignify the board.

—Alas ! in every clime a flying ray  
 Is all we have to cheer our wintry way ;

<sup>1</sup> As Schreck-Horn, the pike of terror ; Wetter-  
 Horn, the pike of storms, etc. etc.

And here the unwilling mind may more  
 than trace

The general sorrows of the human race ;  
 The churlish gales of penury, that blow  
 Cold as the north-wind o'er a waste of snow,  
 To them the gentle groups of bliss deny  
 That on the noon-day bank of leisure lie.  
 Yet more ;—compelled by Powers which  
 only deign

That *solitary* man disturb their reign,  
 Powers that support an unremitting strife  
 With all the tender charities of life,  
 Full oft the father, when his sons have  
 grown

To manhood, seems their title to disown ;  
 And from his nest amid the storms of  
 heaven

Drives, eagle-like, those sons as he was  
 driven ;

With stern composure watches to the  
 plain—

And never, eagle-like, beholds again !

When long-familiar joys are all resigned,  
 Why does their sad remembrance haunt  
 the mind ?

Lo ! where through flat Batavia's willowy  
 groves,

Or by the lazy Seine, the exile roves ;  
 O'er the curled waters Alpine measures  
 swell,

And search the affections to their inmost  
 cell ;

Sweet poison spreads along the listener's  
 veins,

Turning past pleasures into mortal pains ;  
 Poison, which not a frame of steel can  
 brave,

Bows his young head with sorrow to the  
 grave.<sup>2</sup>

Gay lark of hope, thy silent song re-  
 sume !

Ye flattering eastern lights, once more the  
 hills illumine !

Fresh gales and dews of life's delicious  
 morn,

And thou, lost fragrance of the heart,  
 return !

Alas ! the little joy to man allowed  
 Fades like the lustre of an evening cloud ;  
 Or like the beauty in a flower installed,  
 Whose season was, and cannot be recalled.

<sup>2</sup> The well-known effect of the famous air,  
 called in French *Ranz des Vaches*, upon the Swiss  
 troops.

Yet, when oppress by sickness, grief, or care,  
And taught that pain is pleasure's natural  
heir,

We still confide in more than we can  
know ;

Death would be else the favourite friend of  
woe.

'Mid savage rocks, and seas of snow  
that shine,

Between interminable tracts of pine,  
Within a temple stands an awful shrine,  
By an uncertain light revealed, that falls  
On the mute Image and the troubled walls.  
Oh ! give not me that eye of hard disdain  
That views, undimmed, Einsiedlen's<sup>1</sup>  
wretched fane.

While ghastly faces through the gloom  
appear,

Abortive joy, and hope that works in fear ;  
While prayer contends with silenced agony,  
Surely in other thoughts contempt may die.  
If the sad grave of human ignorance bear  
One flower of hope—oh, pass and leave it  
there !

The tall sun, pausing on an Alpine spire,  
Flings o'er the wilderness a stream of fire :  
Now meet we other pilgrims ere the day  
Close on the remnant of their weary way ;  
While they are drawing toward the sacred  
floor

Where, so they fondly think, the worm  
shall gnaw no more.

How gaily murmur and how sweetly taste  
The fountains<sup>2</sup> reared for them amid the  
waste !

Their thirst they slake :—they wash their  
toil-worn feet

And some with tears of joy each other  
greet.

Yes, I must see you when ye first behold  
Those holy turrets tipped with evening  
gold,

In that glad moment will for you a sigh  
Be heaved, of charitable sympathy ;

In that glad moment when your hands are  
prest

In mute devotion on the thankful breast !

<sup>1</sup> This shrine is resorted to, from a hope of relief, by multitudes, from every corner of the Catholic world, labouring under mental or bodily afflictions.

<sup>2</sup> Rude fountains built and covered with sheds for the accommodation of the Pilgrims, in their ascent of the mountain.

Last, let us turn to Chamouny that  
shields

With rocks and gloomy woods her fertile  
fields :

Five streams of ice amid her cots descend,  
And with wild flowers and blooming orchards  
blend ;—

A scene more fair than what the Grecian  
feigns

Of purple lights and ever-vernal plains ;  
Here all the seasons revel hand in hand :

'Mid lawns and shades by breezy rivulets  
fanned,

They sport beneath that mountain's match-  
less height

That holds no commerce with the summer  
night.

From age to age, throughout his lonely  
bounds

The crash of ruin fitfully resounds ;  
Appalling havoc ! but serene his brow,  
Where daylight lingers on perpetual snow ;  
Glitter the stars above, and all is black  
below.

What marvel then if many a Wanderer  
sigh,

While roars the sullen Arve in anger by,  
That not for thy reward, unrivalled Vale !  
Waves the ripe harvest in the autumnal gale ;  
That thou, the slaves of slaves, art doomed  
to pine

And droop, while no Italian arts are thine,  
To soothe or cheer, to soften or refine.

Hail Freedom ! whether it was mine or  
stray,

With shrill winds whistling round my lonely  
way,

On the bleak sides of Cumbria's heath-clad  
moors,

Or where dank sea-weed lashes Scotland's  
shores ;

To scent the sweets of Piedmont's breath-  
ing rose,

And orange gale that o'er Lugano blows ;  
Still have I found, where Tyranny prevails,

That virtue languishes and pleasure fails,  
While the remotest hamlets blessings share

In thy loved presence known, and only  
there ;

Heart-blessings—outward treasures too  
which the eye

Of the sun peeping through the clouds can  
spy,

And every passing breeze will testify.



There, to the porch, belike with jasmine  
bound

Or woodbine wreaths, a smoother path is  
wound ;

The housewife there a brighter garden sees,  
Where hum on busier wing her happy bees ;  
On infant cheeks there fresher roses blow ;  
And grey-haired men look up with livelier  
brow,—

To greet the traveller needing food and  
rest ;

Housed for the night, or but a half-hour's  
guest.

And oh, fair France ! though now the  
traveller sees

Thy three-striped banner fluctuate on the  
breeze ;

Though martial songs have banished songs  
of love,

And nightingales desert the village grove,  
Scared by the fife and rumbling drum's  
alarms,

And the short thunder, and the flash of  
arms ;

That cease not till night falls, when far and  
nigh,

Sole sound, the Soud<sup>1</sup> prolongs his mourn-  
ful cry !

—Yet, hast thou found that Freedom spreads  
her power

Beyond the cottage-hearth, the cottage-door:  
All nature smiles, and owns beneath her eyes  
Her fields peculiar, and peculiar skies.

Yes, as I roamed where Loiret's waters glide  
Through rustling aspens heard from side to  
side,

When from October clouds a milder light  
Fell where the blue flood rippled into white;  
Methought from every cot the watchful bird  
Crowded with ear-piercing power till then  
unheard ;

Each clacking mill, that broke the murmur-  
ing streams,

Rocked the charmed thought in more  
delightful dreams ;

Chasing those pleasant dreams, the falling  
leaf

Awoke a fainter sense of moral grief ;  
The measured echo of the distant flail  
Wound in more welcome cadence down the  
vale ;

<sup>1</sup> An insect so called, which emits a short, melancholy cry, heard at the close of the summer evenings, on the banks of the Loire.

With more majestic course<sup>2</sup> the water rolled,  
And ripening foliage shone with richer gold.

—But foes are gathering—Liberty must  
raise

Red on the hills her beacon's far-seen blaze;  
Must bid the tocsin ring from tower to  
tower !—

Nearer and nearer comes the trying hour !  
Rejoice, brave Land, though pride's per-  
verted ire

Rouse hell's own aid, and wrap thy fields  
in fire :

Lo, from the flames a great and glorious  
birth ;

As if a new-made heaven were hailing a  
new earth !

—All cannot be : the promise is too fair  
For creatures doomed to breathe terrestrial  
air :

Yet not for this will sober reason frown  
Upon that promise, nor the hope disown ;  
She knows that only from high aims ensue  
Rich guerdons, and to them alone are due.

Great God ! by whom the strifes of men  
are weighed

In an impartial balance, give thine aid  
To the just cause ; and, oh ! do thou preside  
Over the mighty stream now spreading wide :  
So shall its waters, from the heavens supplied  
In copious showers, from earth by whole-  
some springs,

Brood o'er the long-parched lands with  
Nile-like wings !

And grant that every sceptred child of clay  
Who cries presumptuous, " Here the flood  
shall stay,"

May in its progress see thy guiding hand,  
And cease the acknowledged purpose to  
withstand ;

Or, swept in anger from the insulted shore,  
Sink with his servile bands, to rise no more !

To-night, my Friend, within this humble  
cot

Be scorn and fear and hope alike forgot  
In timely sleep ; and when, at break of day,  
On the tall peaks the glistening sunbeams  
play,

With a light heart our course we may renew,  
The first whose footsteps print the mountain  
dew.

1793.

<sup>2</sup> The duties upon many parts of the French rivers were so exorbitant, that the poorer people, deprived of the benefit of water carriage, were obliged to transport their goods by land.

## GUILT AND SORROW

OR

## INCIDENTS UPON SALISBURY PLAIN

Unwilling to be unnecessarily particular, I have assigned this poem to the dates 1793 and '94; but in fact much of the "Female Vagrant's" story was composed at least two years before. All that relates to her sufferings as a sailor's wife in America, and her condition of mind during her voyage home, were faithfully taken from the report made to me of her own case by a friend who had been subjected to the same trials and affected in the same way. Mr. Coleridge, when I first became acquainted with him, was so much impressed with this poem, that it would have encouraged me to publish the whole as it then stood; but the mariner's fate appeared to me so tragical as to require a treatment more subdued and yet more strictly applicable in expression than I had at first given to it. This fault was corrected nearly fifty years afterwards, when I determined to publish the whole. It may be worth while to remark, that, though the incidents of this attempt do only in a small degree produce each other, and it deviates accordingly from the general rule by which narrative pieces ought to be governed, it is not therefore wanting in continuous hold upon the mind, or in unity, which is effected by the identity of moral interest that places the two personages upon the same footing in the reader's sympathies. My rambles over many parts of Salisbury Plain put me, as mentioned in the preface, upon writing this poem, and left on my mind imaginative impressions the force of which I have felt to this day. From that district I proceeded to Bath, Bristol, and so on to the banks of the Wye, where I took again to travelling on foot. In remembrance of that part of my journey, which was in '93, I began the verses—"Five years have passed."

## ADVERTISEMENT

PREFIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THIS POEM,  
PUBLISHED IN 1842

Not less than one-third of the following poem, though it has from time to time been altered in the expression, was published so far back as the year 1798, under the title of "The Female Vagrant." The extract is of such length that an apology seems to be required for reprinting it here: but it was necessary to restore it to its original position, or the rest would have been unintelligible. The whole was written before the close of the year 1794, and I will detail, rather as matter of literary biography than for any other

reason, the circumstances under which it was produced.

During the latter part of the summer of 1793, having passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet which was then preparing for sea off Portsmouth at the commencement of the war, I left the place with melancholy forebodings. The American war was still fresh in memory. The struggle which was beginning, and which many thought would be brought to a speedy close by the irresistible arms of Great Britain being added to those of the allies, I was assured in my own mind would be of long continuance, and productive of distress and misery beyond all possible calculation. This conviction was pressed upon me by having been a witness, during a long residence in revolutionary France, of the spirit which prevailed in that country. After leaving the Isle of Wight, I spent two days in wandering on foot over Salisbury Plain, which, though cultivation was then widely spread through parts of it, had upon the whole a still more impressive appearance than it now retains.

The monuments and traces of antiquity, scattered in abundance over that region, led me unavoidably to compare what we know or guess of those remote times with certain aspects of modern society, and with calamities, principally those consequent upon war, to which, more than other classes of men, the poor are subject. In those reflections, joined with particular facts that had come to my knowledge, the following stanzas originated.

In conclusion, to obviate some distraction in the minds of those who are well acquainted with Salisbury Plain, it may be proper to say, that of the features described as belonging to it, one or two are taken from other desolate parts of England.

I

A TRAVELLER on the skirt of Sarum's  
Plain  
Pursued his vagrant way, with feet half  
bare;  
Stooping his gait, but not as if to gain  
Help from the staff he bore; for mien and  
air  
Were hardy, though his cheek seemed  
worn with care  
Both of the time to come, and time long  
fled:  
Down fell in straggling locks his thin grey  
hair;  
A coat he wore of military red  
But faded, and stuck o'er with many a patch  
and shred.

II

While thus he journeyed, step by step led on,  
He saw and passed a stately inn, full sure  
That welcome in such house for him was none.  
No board inscribed the needy to allure  
Hung there, no bush proclaimed to old and poor  
And desolate, "Here you will find a friend!"  
The pendent grapes glittered above the door;—  
On he must pace, perchance 'till night descend,  
Where'er the dreary roads their bare white lines extend.

III

The gathering clouds grow red with stormy fire,  
In streaks diverging wide and mounting high;  
That inn he long had passed; the distant spire,  
Which oft as he looked back had fixed his eye,  
Was lost, though still he looked, in the blank sky.  
Perplexed and comfortless he gazed around,  
And scarce could any trace of man descry,  
Save cornfields stretched and stretching without bound;  
But where the sower dwelt was nowhere to be found.

IV

No tree was there, no meadow's pleasant green,  
No brook to wet his lip or soothe his ear;  
Long files of corn-stacks here and there were seen,  
But not one dwelling-place his heart to cheer.  
Some labourer, thought he, may perchance be near;  
And so he sent a feeble shout—in vain;  
No voice made answer, he could only hear  
Winds rustling over plots of unripe grain,  
Or whistling thro' thin grass along the unfurrowed plain.

V

Long had he fancied each successive slope  
Concealed some cottage, whither he might turn  
And rest; but now along heaven's darkening cope  
The crows rushed by in eddies, homeward borne.  
Thus warned he sought some shepherd's spreading thorn  
Or hovel from the storm to shield his head,  
But sought in vain; for now, all wild, forlorn,  
And vacant, a huge waste around him spread;  
The wet cold ground, he feared, must be his only bed.

VI

And be it so—for to the chill night shower  
And the sharp wind his head he oft hath bared;  
A Sailor he, who many a wretched hour  
Hath told; for, landing after labour hard,  
Full long endured in hope of just reward,  
He to an armed fleet was forced away  
By seamen, who perhaps themselves had shared  
Like fate; was hurried off, a helpless prey,  
'Gainst all that in his heart, or theirs perhaps, said nay.

VII

For years the work of carnage did not cease,  
And death's dire aspect daily he surveyed,  
Death's minister; then came his glad release,  
And hope returned, and pleasure fondly made  
Her dwelling in his dreams. By Fancy's aid  
The happy husband flies, his arms to throw  
Round his wife's neck; the prize of victory laid  
In her full lap, he sees such sweet tears flow  
As if thenceforth nor pain nor trouble she could know.

## VIII

Vain hope! for fraud took all that he had earned.

The lion roars and gluts his tawny brood  
Even in the desert's heart; but he, returned,

Bears not to those he loves their needful food.

His home approaching, but in such a mood  
That from his sight his children might have run.

He met a traveller, robbed him, shed his blood;

And when the miserable work was done  
He fled, a vagrant since, the murderer's fate to shun.

## IX

From that day forth no place to him could be

So lonely, but that thence might come a pang

Brought from without to inward misery.  
Now, as he plodded on, with sullen clang  
A sound of chains along the desert rang;  
He looked, and saw upon a gibbet high  
A human body that in irons swang,  
Upflung by the tempest whirling by;  
And, hovering, round it often did a raven fly.<sup>1</sup>

## X

It was a spectacle which none might view,  
In spot so savage, but with shuddering pain;

Nor only did for him at once renew  
All he had feared from man, but roused a train

Of the mind's phantoms, horrible as vain.  
The stones, as if to cover him from day,  
Rolled at his back along the living plain;  
He fell, and without sense or motion lay;  
But, when the trance was gone, feebly  
pursued his way.

## XI

As one whose brain habitual phrensy fires  
Owes to the fit in which his soul hath tossed  
Profounder quiet, when the fit retires,  
Even so the dire phantasma which had  
crossed

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

His sense, in sudden vacancy quite lost,  
Left his mind still as a deep evening stream.  
Nor, if accosted now, in thought engrossed,  
Moody, or only troubled, would he seem  
To traveller who might talk of any casual theme.

## XII

Hurtle the clouds in deeper darkness piled,  
Gone is the raven timely rest to seek;  
He seemed the only creature in the wild  
On whom the elements their rage might wreak;

Save that the bustard, of those regions bleak

Shy tenant, seeing by the uncertain light  
A man there wandering, gave a mournful shriek,

And half upon the ground, with strange affright,

Forced hard against the wind a thick unwieldy flight.

## XIII

All, all was cheerless to the horizon's bound;  
The weary eye—which, wheresoe'er it strays,  
Marks nothing but the red sun's setting round,

Or on the earth strange lines, in former days

Left by gigantic arms—at length surveys  
What seems an antique castle spreading wide;

Hoary and naked are its walls, and raise  
Their brow sublime: in shelter there to bide  
He turned, while rain poured down smoking  
on every side.

## XIV

Pile of Stone-henge! so proud to hint yet keep

Thy secrets, thou that lov'st to stand and hear

The Plain resounding to the whirlwind's sweep,

Inmate of lonesome Nature's endless year;  
Even if thou saw'st the giant wicker rear  
For sacrifice its throngs of living men,  
Before thy face did ever wretch appear,  
Who in his heart had groaned with deadlier pain

Than he who, tempest-driven, thy shelter  
now would gain.

## XV

Within that fabric of mysterious form,  
 Winds met in conflict, each by turns  
 supreme ;  
 And, from the perilous ground dislodged,  
 through storm  
 And rain he wildered on, no moon to stream  
 From gulf of parting clouds one friendly  
 beam,  
 Nor any friendly sound his footsteps led ;  
 Once did the lightning's faint disastrous  
 gleam  
 Disclose a naked guide-post's double head,  
 Sight which tho' lost at once a gleam of  
 pleasure shed.

## XVI

No swinging sign-board creaked from  
 cottage elm  
 To stay his steps with faintness overcome ;  
 'Twas dark and void as ocean's watery  
 realm  
 Roaring with storms beneath night's star-  
 less gloom ;  
 No gipsy cowered o'er fire of furze or  
 broom ;  
 No labourer watched his red kiln glaring  
 bright,  
 Nor taper glimmered dim from sick man's  
 room ;  
 Along the waste no line of mournful light  
 From lamp of lonely toll-gate streamed  
 athwart the night.

## XVII

At length, though hid in clouds, the moon  
 arose ;  
 The downs were visible—and now revealed  
 A structure stands, which two bare slopes  
 enclose.  
 It was a spot, where, ancient vows fulfilled,  
 Kind pious hands did to the Virgin build  
 A lonely Spital, the belated swain  
 From the night terrors of that waste to  
 shield :  
 But there no human being could remain,  
 And now the walls are named the " Dead  
 House " of the plain.

## XVIII

Though he had little cause to love the abode  
 Of man, or covet sight of mortal face,  
 Yet when faint beams of light that ruin  
 showed,  
 How glad he was at length to find some  
 trace  
 Of human shelter in that dreary place.  
 Till to his flock the early shepherd goes,  
 Here shall much-needed sleep his frame  
 embrace.  
 In a dry nook where fern the floor bestrows  
 He lays his stiffened limbs,—his eyes begin  
 to close ;

## XIX

When hearing a deep sigh, that seemed to  
 come  
 From one who mourned in sleep, he raised  
 his head,  
 And saw a woman in the naked room  
 Outstretched, and turning on a restless bed :  
 The moon a wan dead light around her shed.  
 He waked her—spake in tone that would  
 not fail,  
 He hoped, to calm her mind ; but ill he  
 sped,  
 For of that ruin she had heard a tale  
 Which now with freezing thoughts did all  
 her powers assail ;

## XX

Had heard of one who, forced from storms  
 to shroud,  
 Felt the loose walls of this decayed Retreat  
 Rock to incessant neighings shrill and loud,  
 While his horse pawed the floor with furious  
 heat ;  
 Till on a stone, that sparkled to his feet,  
 Struck, and still struck again, the troubled  
 horse :  
 The man half raised the stone with pain  
 and sweat,  
 Half raised, for well his arm might lose its  
 force  
 Disclosing the grim head of a late murdered  
 corse.

## XXI

Such tale of this lone mansion she had  
 learned  
 And, when that shape, with eyes in sleep  
 half drowned,

By the moon's sullen lamp she first discerned,  
Cold stony horror all her senses bound.  
Her he addressed in words of cheering sound ;  
Recovering heart, like answer did she make ;  
And well it was that, of the corse there found,  
In converse that ensued she nothing spake ;  
She knew not what dire pangs in him such tale could wake.

## XXII

But soon his voice and words of kind intent  
Banished that dismal thought ; and now the wind  
In fainter howlings told its *rage* was spent :  
Meanwhile discourse ensued of various kind,  
Which by degrees a confidence of mind  
And mutual interest failed not to create.  
And, to a natural sympathy resigned,  
In that forsaken building where they sate  
The Woman thus retraced her own untoward fate.

## XXIII

"By Derwent's side my father dwelt—a man  
Of virtuous life, by pious parents bred ;  
And I believe that, soon as I began  
To lisp, he made me kneel beside my bed,  
And in his hearing there my prayers I said :  
And afterwards, by my good father taught,  
I read, and loved the books in which I read ;  
For books in every neighbouring house I sought,  
And nothing to my mind a sweeter pleasure brought.

## XXIV

"A little croft we owned—a plot of corn,  
A garden stored with peas, and mint, and thyme,  
And flowers for posies, oft on Sunday morn  
Plucked while the church bells rang their earliest chime.

Can I forget our freaks at shearing time !  
My hen's rich nest through long grass scarce espied ;  
The cowslip-gathering in June's dewy prime ;  
The swans that with white chests upreared in pride  
Rushing and racing came to meet me at the water-side.

## XXV

"The staff I well remember which upbore  
The bending body of my active sire ;  
His seat beneath the honied sycamore  
Where the bees hummed, and chair by winter fire ;  
When market-morning came, the neat attire  
With which, though bent on haste, myself I decked ;  
Our watchful house-dog, that would tease and tire  
The stranger till its barking-fit I checked ;  
The red-breast, known for years, which at my casement pecked.

## XXVI

"The suns of twenty summers danced along,—  
Too little marked how fast they rolled away :  
But, through severe mischance and cruel wrong,  
My father's substance fell into decay :  
We toiled and struggled, hoping for a day  
When Fortune might put on a kinder look ;  
But vain were wishes, efforts vain as they ;  
He from his old hereditary nook  
Must part ; the summons came ;—our final leave we took.

## XXVII

"It was indeed a miserable hour  
When, from the last hill-top, my sire surveyed,  
Peering above the trees, the steeple tower  
That on his marriage day sweet music made !

Till then, he hoped his bones might there  
be laid  
Close by my mother in their native bowers :  
Bidding me trust in God, he stood and  
prayed ;—  
I could not pray :—through tears that fell  
in showers  
Glimmered our dear-loved home, alas ! no  
longer ours !

## XXVIII

" There was a Youth whom I had loved so  
long,  
That when I loved him not I cannot say :  
'Mid the green mountains many a thought-  
less song  
We two had sung, like gladsome birds in  
May ;  
When we began to tire of childish play,  
We seemed still more and more to prize  
each other ;  
We talked of marriage and our marriage  
day ;

*A* And I in truth did love him like a brother,  
For never could I hope to meet with such  
another.

## XXIX

" Two years were passed since to a distant  
town  
He had repaired to ply a gainful trade :  
What tears of bitter grief, till then un-  
known !  
What tender vows, our last sad kiss de-  
layed !  
To him we turned :—we had no other aid :  
Like one revived, upon his neck I wept ;  
And her whom he had loved in joy, he  
said,  
He well could love in grief ; his faith he  
kept ;  
And in a quiet home once more my father  
slept.

## XXX

" We lived in peace and comfort ; and were  
blest  
With daily bread, by constant toil sup-  
plied.  
Three lovely babes had lain upon my  
breast ;

And often, viewing their sweet smiles, I  
sighed,  
And knew not why. My happy father  
died,  
When threatened war reduced the children's  
meal :  
Thrice happy ! that for him the grave  
could hide  
The empty loom, cold hearth, and silent  
wheel,  
And tears that flowed for ills which patience  
might not heal.

## XXXI

" 'Twas a hard change ; an evil time was  
come ;  
We had no hope, and no relief could gain :  
But soon, with proud parade, the noisy  
drum  
Beat round to clear the streets of want and  
pain.  
My husband's arms now only served to  
strain  
Me and his children hungering in his view ;  
In such dismay my prayers and tears were  
vain :  
To join those miserable men he flew,  
And now to the sea-coast, with numbers  
more, we drew.

## XXXII

" There were we long neglected, and we bore  
Much sorrow ere the fleet its anchor weighed ;  
Green fields before us, and our native shore,  
We breathed a pestilential air, that made  
Ravage for which no knell was heard. We  
prayed  
For our departure ; wished and wished—  
nor knew,  
'Mid that long sickness and those hopes  
delayed,  
That happier days we never more must  
view.  
The parting signal streamed—at last the  
land withdrew.

## XXXIII

" But the calm summer season now was past,  
On as we drove, the equinoctial deep  
Ran mountains high before the howling  
blast,  
And many perished in the whirlwind's  
sweep.

We gazed with terror on their gloomy sleep,  
Untaught that soon such anguish must  
ensue,

Our hopes such harvest of affliction reap,  
That we the mercy of the waves should  
rue :

We reached the western world, a poor  
devoted crew.

## XXXIV

"The pains and plagues that on our heads  
came down,

Disease and famine, agony and fear,  
In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,  
It would unman the firmest heart to hear.  
All perished—all in one remorseless year,  
Husband and children ! one by one, by  
sword

And ravenous plague, all perished : every  
tear

Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board  
A British ship I waked, as from a trance  
restored."

## XXXV

Here paused she of all present thought  
forlorn,

Nor voice nor sound, that moment's pain  
expressed,

Yet Nature, with excess of grief o'erborne,  
From her full eyes their watery load re-  
leased.

He too was mute ; and, ere her weeping  
ceased,

He rose, and to the ruin's portal went,  
And saw the dawn opening the silvery east  
With rays of promise, north and southward  
sent ;

And soon with crimson fire kindled the  
firmament.

## XXXVI

"O come," he cried, "come, after weary  
night

Of such rough storm, this happy change to  
view."

So forth she came, and eastward looked ;  
the sight

Over her brow like dawn of gladness threw ;  
Upon her cheek, to which its youthful hue

Seemed to return, dried the last lingering  
tear,

And from her grateful heart a fresh one  
drew :

The whilst her comrade to her pensive  
cheer

Tempered fit words of hope ; and the lark  
warbled near.

## XXXVII

They looked and saw a lengthening road,  
and wain

That rang down a bare slope not far re-  
mote :

The barrows glistered bright with drops of  
rain,

Whistled the waggoner with merry note,  
The cock far off sounded his clarion throat ;  
But town, or farm, or hamlet, none they  
viewed,

Only were told there stood a lonely cot  
A long mile thence. While thither they  
pursued

Their way, the Woman thus her mournful  
tale renewed.

## XXXVIII

"Peaceful as this immeasurable plain  
Is now, by beams of dawning light imprest,  
In the calm sunshine slept the glittering  
main ;

The very ocean hath its hour of rest.  
I too forgot the heavings of my breast.  
How quiet 'round me ship and ocean were !  
As quiet all within me. I was blest,  
And looked, and fed upon the silent air  
Until it seemed to bring a joy to my  
despair.

## XXXIX

"Ah ! how unlike those late terrific sleeps,  
And groans that rage of racking famine  
spoke ;

The unburied dead that lay in festering  
heaps,

The breathing pestilence that rose like  
smoke,

The shriek that from the distant battle  
broke,



The mine's dire earthquake, and the pallid  
host  
Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-  
stroke  
To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick  
anguish tossed,  
Hope died, and fear itself in agony was  
lost !

## XL

"Some mighty gulf of separation past,  
I seemed transported to another world ;  
A thought resigned with pain, when from  
the mast  
The impatient mariner the sail unfurled,  
And, whistling, called the wind that hardly  
curled  
The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts  
of home  
And from all hope I was for ever hurled.  
For me—farthest from earthly port to roam  
Was best, could I but shun the spot where  
man might come.

## XLI

"And oft I thought (my fancy was so strong)  
That I, at last, a resting-place had found ;  
'Here will I dwell,' said I, 'my whole life  
long,  
Roaming the illimitable waters round ;  
Here will I live, of all but heaven disowned,  
And end my days upon the peaceful flood.'—  
To break my dream the vessel reached its  
bound ;  
And homeless near a thousand homes I  
stood,  
And near a thousand tables pined and  
wanted food.

## XLII

"No help I sought ; in sorrow turned adrift,  
Was hopeless, as if cast on some bare  
rock ;  
Nor morsel to my mouth that day did lift,  
Nor raised my hand at any door to knock.  
I lay where, with his drowsy mates, the  
cock  
From the cross-timber of an out-house  
hung :  
Dismally tolled, that night, the city clock !

At morn my sick heart hunger scarcely  
stung,  
Nor to the beggar's language could I fit  
my tongue.

## XLIII

"So passed a second day ; and, when the  
third  
Was come, I tried in vain the crowd's  
resort.  
—In deep despair, by frightful wishes  
stirred,  
Near the sea-side I reached a ruined fort ;  
There, pains which nature could no more  
support,  
With blindness linked, did on my vitals  
fall ;  
And, after many interruptions short  
Of hideous sense, I sank, nor step could  
crawl :  
Unsought for was the help that did my life  
recall.

## XLIV

"Borne to a hospital, I lay with brain  
Drowsy and weak, and shattered memory ;  
I heard my neighbours in their beds com-  
plain  
Of many things which never troubled me—  
Of feet still bustling round with busy glee,  
Of looks where common kindness had no  
part,  
Of service done with cold formality,  
Fretting the fever round the languid heart,  
And groans which, as they said, might  
make a dead man start.

## XLV

"These things just served to stir the slum-  
bering sense,  
Nor pain nor pity in my bosom raised.  
With strength did memory return ; and,  
thence  
Dismissed, again on open day I gazed,  
At houses, men, and common light, amazed.  
The lanes I sought, and, as the sun retired,  
Came where beneath the trees a faggot  
blazed,  
The travellers saw me weep, my fate in-  
quired,  
And gave me food—and rest, more wel-  
come, more desired.

## XLVI

"Rough potters seemed they, trading soberly  
With panniered asses driven from door to  
door ;

But life of happier sort set forth to me,  
And other joys my fancy to allure—  
The bag-pipe dinning on the midnight moor  
In barn uplighted ; and companions boon,  
Well met from far with revelry secure  
Among the forest glades, while jocund June  
Rolled fast along the sky his warm and  
genial moon.

## XLVII

"But ill they suited me—those journeys dark  
O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft to  
hatch !

To charm the surly house-dog's faithful  
bark,

Or hang on tip-toe at the lifted latch.  
The gloomy lantern, and the dim blue match,  
The black disguise, the warning whistleshrill,  
And ear still busy on its nightly watch,  
Were not for me, brought up in nothing ill :  
Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts  
were brooding still.

## XLVIII

"What could I do, unaided and unblest ?  
My father ! gone was every friend of thine :  
And kindred of dead husband are at best  
Small help ; and, after marriage such as  
mine,

With little kindness would to me incline.  
Nor was I then for toil or service fit ;  
My deep-drawn sighs no effort could con-  
fine ;

In open air forgetful would I sit  
Whole hours, with idle arms in moping  
sorrow knit.

## XLIX

"The roads I paced, I loitered through the  
fields ;

Contentedly, yet sometimes self-accused.  
Trusted my life to what chance bounty  
yields,

Now coldly given, now utterly refused.  
The ground I for my bed have often used :

But what afflicts my peace with keenest ruth,  
Is that I have my inner self abused,  
Foregone the home delight of constant  
truth,

And clear and open soul, so prized in fear-  
less youth.

## L

"Through tears the rising sun I oft have  
viewed,

Through tears have seen him towards that  
world descend

Where my poor heart lost all its fortitude :  
Three years a wanderer now my course I  
bend—

Oh ! tell me whither—for no earthly friend  
Have I."—She ceased, and weeping turned  
away ;

As if because her tale was at an end,  
She wept ; because she had no more to say  
Of that perpetual weight which on her spirit  
lay.

## LI

True sympathy the Sailor's looks expressed,  
His looks—for pondering he was mute the  
while.

Of social Order's care for wretchedness,  
Of Time's sure help to calm and reconcile,  
Joy's second spring and Hope's long-trea-  
sured smile,

'Twas not for *him* to speak—a man so tried.  
Yet, to relieve her heart, in friendly style  
Proverbial words of comfort he applied,  
And not in vain, while they went pacing  
side by side.

## LII

Ere long, from heaps of turf, before their  
sight,

Together smoking in the sun's slant beam,  
Rise various wreaths that into one unite  
Which high and higher mounts with silver  
gleam :

Fair spectacle,—but instantly a scream  
Thence bursting shrill did all remark pre-  
vent ;

They paused, and heard a hoarser voice  
blaspheme,

And female cries. Their course they  
thither bent,

And met a man who foamed with anger  
vehement.

## LIII

A woman stood with quivering lips and pale,  
 And, pointing to a little child that lay  
 Stretched on the ground, began a piteous  
 tale ;  
 How in a simple freak of thoughtless play  
 He had provoked his father, who straight-  
 way,  
 As if each blow were deadlier than the last,  
 Struck the poor innocent. Pallid with  
 dismay  
 The Soldier's Widow heard and stood  
 aghast ;  
 And stern looks on the man her grey-haired  
 Comrade cast.

## LIV

His voice with indignation rising high  
 Such further deed in manhood's name for-  
 bade ;  
 The peasant, wild in passion, made reply  
 With bitter insult and revilings sad ;  
 Asked him in scorn what business there he  
 had ;  
 What kind of plunder he was hunting now ;  
 The gallows would one day of him be glad ;  
 Though inward anguish damped the Sailor's  
 brow,  
 Yet calm he seemed as thoughts so poignant  
 would allow.

## LV

Softly he stroked the child, who lay out-  
 stretched  
 With face to earth ; and, as the boy turned  
 round  
 His battered head, a groan the Sailor  
 fetched  
 As if he saw—there and upon that ground—  
 Strange repetition of the deadly wound  
 He had himself inflicted. Through his  
 brain  
 At once the griding iron passage found ;  
 Deluge of tender thoughts then rushed  
 amain,  
 Nor could his sunken eyes the starting tear  
 restrain.

## LVI

Within himself he said—What hearts have  
 we !  
 The blessing this a father gives his child !  
 Yet happy thou, poor boy ! compared with  
 me,  
 Suffering not doing ill—fate far more mild.  
 The stranger's looks and tears of wrath  
 beguiled  
 The father, and relenting thoughts awoke ;  
 He kissed his son—so all was reconciled.  
 Then, with a voice which inward trouble  
 broke  
 Ere to his lips it came, the Sailor them  
 bespoke.

## LVII

“ Bad is the world, and hard is the world's  
 law  
 Even for the man who wears the warmest  
 fleece ;  
 Much need have ye that time more closely  
 draw  
 The bond of nature, all unkindness cease,  
 And that among so few there still be peace :  
 Else can ye hope but with such numerous  
 foes  
~~Your pains shall ever with your years in-  
 crease ?”~~  
 While from his heart the appropriate lesson  
 flows,  
 A correspondent calm stole gently o'er his  
 woes.

## LVIII

Forthwith the pair passed on ; and down  
 they look  
 Into a narrow valley's pleasant scene  
 Where wreaths of vapour tracked a winding  
 brook,  
 That babbled on through groves and  
 meadows green ;  
 A low-roofed house peeped out the trees  
 between ;  
 The dripping groves resound with cheerful  
 lays,  
 And melancholy lowings intervene  
 Of scattered herds, that in the meadow  
 graze,  
 Some amid lingering shade, some touched  
 by the sun's rays.

## LIX

They saw and heard, and, winding with the road,  
 Down a thick wood, they dropt into the vale ;  
 Comfort, by prouder mansions unbestowed,  
 Their wearied frames, she hoped, would soon regale.  
 Erelong they reached that cottage in the dale :  
 It was a rustic inn ;—the board was spread,  
 The milk-maid followed with her brimming pail,  
 And lustily the master carved the bread,  
 Kindly the housewife pressed, and they in comfort fed.

## LX

Their breakfast done, the pair, though loth, must part ;  
Wanderers whose course no longer now agrees,  
She rose and bade farewell ! and, while her heart  
Struggled with tears nor could its sorrow ease,  
She left him there ; for, clustering round his knees,  
With his oak-staff the cottage children played ;  
And soon she reached a spot o'erhung with trees  
And banks of ragged earth ; beneath the shade  
Across the pebbly road a little runnel strayed.

## LXI

A cart and horse beside the rivulet stood ;  
 Chequering the canvas roof the sunbeams shone.  
 She saw the carman bend to scoop the flood  
 As the wain fronted her,—wherein lay one,  
 A pale-faced Woman, in disease far gone.  
 The carman wet her lips as well behaved ;  
 Bed under her lean body there was none,  
 Though even to die near one she most had loved  
 She could not of herself those wasted limbs have moved.

## LXII

The Soldier's Widow learned, with honest pain  
 And homefelt force of sympathy sincere,  
 Why thus that worn-out wretch must there sustain  
 The jolting road and morning air severe.  
 The wain pursued its way ; and following near  
 In pure compassion she her steps retraced  
 Far as the cottage. " A sad sight is here,"  
 She cried aloud ; and forth ran out in haste  
 The friends whom she had left but a few minutes past.

## LXIII

While to the door with eager speed they ran,  
 From her bare straw the Woman half up-raised  
 Her bony visage—gaunt and deadly wan ;  
 No pity asking, on the group she gazed  
 With a dim eye, distracted and amazed ;  
 Then sank upon her straw with feeble moan.  
 Fervently cried the housewife—" God be praised,  
 I have a house that I can call my own ;  
 Nor shall she perish there, untended and alone !"

## LXIV

So in they bear her to the chimney seat,  
 And busily, though yet with fear, untie  
 Her garments, and, to warm her icy feet  
 And chafe her temples, careful hands apply.  
 Nature reviving, with a deep-drawn sigh  
 She strove, and not in vain, her head to rear ;  
 Then said—" I thank you all ; if I must die,  
 The God in heaven my prayers for you will hear ;  
 Till now I did not think my end had been so near.

## LXV

" Barred every comfort labour could procure,  
 Suffering what no endurance could assuage,  
 I was compelled to seek my father's door,  
 Though loth to be a burthen on his age.

But sickness stopped me in an early stage  
Of my sad journey ; and within the wain  
They placed me—there to end life's  
pilgrimage,

Unless beneath your roof I may remain ;  
For I shall never see my father's door again.

## LXVI

" My life, Heaven knows, hath long been  
burthensome ;

But, if I have not meekly suffered, meek  
May my end be ! Soon will this voice be  
dumb :

Should child of mine e'er wander hither,  
speak

Of me, say that the worm is on my cheek. —  
Torn from our hut, that stood beside the sea  
Near Portland lighthouse in a lonesome  
creek,

My husband served in sad captivity  
On shipboard, bound till peace or death  
should set him free.

## LXVII

" A sailor's wife I knew a widow's cares,  
Yet two sweet little ones partook my bed ;  
Hope cheered my dreams, and to my daily  
prayers

Our heavenly Father granted each day's  
bread ;

Till one was found by stroke of violence  
dead,

Whose body near our cottage chanced to lie ;  
A dire suspicion drove us from our shed ;  
In vain to find a friendly face we try,

Nor could we live together those poor boys  
and I ;

## LXVIII

" For evil tongues made oath how on that  
day

My husband lurked about the neighbour-  
hood ;

Now he had fled, and whither none could  
say,

And *he* had done the deed in the dark  
wood—

Near his own home !—but he was mild and  
good ;

Never on earth was gentler creature seen ;  
He'd not have robbed the raven of its food.

My husband's lovingkindness stood between  
Me and all worldly harms and wrongs how-  
ever keen."

## LXIX

Alas ! the thing she told with labouring  
breath

The Sailor knew too well. That wickedness  
His hand had wrought ; and when, in the  
hour of death,

He saw his Wife's lips move his name to  
bless

With her last words, unable to suppress  
His anguish, with his heart he ceased to  
strive ;

And, weeping loud in this extreme distress,  
He cried—" Do pity me ! That thou  
shouldst live

I neither ask nor wish—forgive me, but  
forgive !"

## LXX

To tell the change that Voice within her  
wrought

Nature by sign or sound made no essay ;  
A sudden joy surprised expiring thought,  
And every mortal pang dissolved away.

Borne gently to a bed, in death she lay ;  
Yet still while over her the husband bent,  
A look was in her face which seemed to say,  
" Be blest ; by sight of thee from heaven  
was sent

Peace to my parting soul, the fulness of  
content."

## LXXI

*She* slept in peace,—his pulses throbbed  
and stopped,

Breathless he gazed upon her face,—then  
took

Her hand in his, and raised it, but both  
dropped,

When on his own he cast a rueful look.

His ears were never silent ; sleep forsook

His burning eyelids stretched and stiff as  
lead ;

All night from time to time under him shook  
The floor as he lay shuddering on his bed ;

And oft he groaned aloud, " O God, that I  
were dead !"

## LXXII

The Soldier's Widow lingered in the cot,  
And, when he rose, he thanked her pious  
care

Through which his Wife, to that kind  
shelter brought,

Died in his arms ; and with those thanks a  
prayer

He breathed for her, and for that merciful  
pair.

The corse interred, not one hour heremained  
Beneath their roof, but to the open air  
A burthen, now with fortitude sustained,  
He bore within a breast where dreadful  
quiet reigned.

## LXXIII

Confirmed of purpose, fearlessly prepared  
For act and suffering, to the city straight  
He journeyed, and forthwith his crime  
declared :

" And from your doom," he added, " now  
I wait,

Nor let it linger long, the murderer's fate."  
Not ineffectual was that piteous claim :

" O welcome sentence which will end though  
late,"

He said, " the pangs that to my conscience  
came

Out of that deed. My trust, Saviour ! is  
in thy name ! "

## LXXIV

His fate was pitied. Him in iron case  
(Reader, forgive the intolerable thought)  
They hung not :—no one on *his* form or face  
Could gaze, as on a show by idlers sought ;  
No kindred sufferer, to his death-place  
brought

By lawless curiosity or chance,  
When into storm the evening sky is wrought,  
Upon his swinging corse an eye can glance,  
And drop, as he once dropped, in miserable  
trance.

1793-94.

## LINES

Left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree, which stands  
near the lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate part  
of the shore, commanding a beautiful prospect.

Composed in part at school at Hawkshead.  
The tree has disappeared, and the slip of Common  
on which it stood, that ran parallel to the lake,  
and lay open to it, has long been enclosed ; so  
that the road has lost much of its attraction. This  
spot was my favourite walk in the evenings during  
the latter part of my school-time. The individual  
whose habits and character are here given, was a  
gentleman of the neighbourhood, a man of talent  
and learning, who had been educated at one of  
our Universities, and returned to pass his time in  
seclusion on his own estate. He died a bachelor  
in middle age. Induced by the beauty of the  
prospect, he built a small summer-house on the  
rocks above the peninsula on which the ferry-house  
stands. This property afterwards passed into the  
hands of the late Mr. Curwen. The site was long  
ago pointed out by Mr. West in his Guide, as the  
pride of the lakes, and now goes by the name of  
" The Station." So much used I to be delighted  
with the view from it, while a little boy, that some  
years before the first pleasure-house was built, I  
led thither from Hawkshead a youngster about  
my own age, an Irish boy, who was a servant to  
an itinerant conjuror. My motive was to witness  
the pleasure I expected the boy would receive  
from the prospect of the islands below and the  
intermingling water. I was not disappointed ;  
and I hope the fact, insignificant as it may appear  
to some, may be thought worthy of note by others  
who may cast their eye over these notes.

NAY, Traveller ! rest. This lonely Yew-  
tree stands

Far from all human dwelling : what if here  
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant  
berb ?

What if the bee love not these barren  
boughs ?

Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling  
waves,

That break against the shore, shall lull thy  
mind

By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

Who he was

That piled these stones and with the mossy  
sod

First covered, and here taught this aged  
Tree

With its dark arms to form a circling bower,  
I well remember.—He was one who owned

No common soul. In youth by science  
nursed,  
And led by nature into a wild scene  
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth  
A favoured Being, knowing no desire  
Which genius did not hallow ; 'gainst the  
taint  
Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,  
And scorn,—against all enemies prepared,  
All but neglect. The world, for so it  
thought,  
Owed him no service ; wherefore he at once  
With indignation turned himself away,  
And with the food of pride sustained his  
soul  
In solitude.—Stranger ! these gloomy  
boughs  
Had charms for him ; and here he loved to  
sit,  
His only visitants a straggling sheep,  
The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper:  
And on these barren rocks, with fern and  
heath,  
And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,  
Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour  
A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here  
An emblem of his own unfruitful life :  
And, lifting up his head, he then would  
gaze  
On the more distant scene,—how lovely 'tis  
Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it  
became  
Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain  
The beauty, still more beauteous ! Nor,  
that time,  
When nature had subdued him to herself,  
Would he forget those Beings to whose  
minds,  
Warm from the labours of benevolence,  
The world, and human life, appeared a  
scene  
Of kindred loveliness : then he would sigh,  
Inly disturbed, to think that others felt  
What he must never feel : and so, lost  
Man !  
On visionary views would fancy feed,  
Till his eye streamed with tears. In this  
deep vale  
He died,—this seat his only monument.  
If Thou be one whose heart the holy  
forms  
Of young imagination have kept pure,  
Stranger ! henceforth be warned ; and  
know that pride,

Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,  
Is littleness ; that he, who feels contempt  
For any living thing, hath faculties  
Which he has never used ; that thought  
with him  
Is in its infancy. The man whose eye  
Is ever on himself doth look on one,  
The least of Nature's works, one who  
might move  
The wise man to that scorn which wisdom  
holds  
Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou !  
Instructed that true knowledge leads to love ;  
True dignity abides with him alone  
Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,  
Can still suspect, and still revere himself,  
In lowliness of heart. 1795.

THE BORDERERS <sup>1</sup>

## A Tragedy

Of this dramatic work I have little to say in addition to the short note which will be found at the end of the volume. It was composed at Racedown in Dorsetshire during the latter part of the year 1795, and in the course of the following year. Had it been the work of a later period of life, it would have been different in some respects from what it is now. The plot would have been something more complex, and a greater variety of characters introduced to relieve the mind from the pressure of incidents so mournful. The manners also would have been more attended to. My care was almost exclusively given to the passions and the characters, and the position in which the persons in the Drama stood relatively to each other, that the reader (for I had then no thought of the Stage) might be moved, and to a degree instructed, by lights penetrating somewhat into the depths of our nature. In this endeavour, I cannot think, upon a very late review, that I have failed. As to the scene and period of action, little more was required for my purpose than the absence of established law and government ; so that the agents might be at liberty to act on their own impulses. Nevertheless I do remember that, having a wish to colour the manners in some degree from local history more than my knowledge enabled me to do, I read Redpath's *History of the Borders*, but found there nothing to my purpose. I once made an observation to Sir Walter Scott, in which he concurred, that it was difficult to conceive how so dull a book could be

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

written on such a subject. Much about the same time, but a little after, Coleridge was employed in writing his tragedy of "Remorse," and it happened that soon after, through one of the Mr. Pooles, Mr. Knight the actor heard that we had been engaged in writing Plays, and upon his suggestion mine was curtailed, and I believe Coleridge's also was offered to Mr. Harris, manager of Covent Garden. For myself, I had no hope nor even a wish (though a successful play would, in the then state of my finances, have been a most welcome piece of good fortune) that he should accept my performance; so that I incurred no disappointment when the piece was *judiciously* returned as not calculated for the Stage. In this judgment I entirely concurred, and had it been otherwise, it was so natural for me to shrink from public notice, that any hope I might have had of success would not have reconciled me altogether to such an exhibition. Mr. C.'s Play was, as is well known, brought forward several years after through the kindness of Mr. Sheridan. In conclusion I may observe that while I was composing this Play I wrote a short essay illustrative of that constitution and those tendencies of human nature which make the apparently  *motiveless*  actions of bad men intelligible to careful observers. This was partly done with reference to the character of Oswald, and his persevering endeavour to lead the man he disliked into so heinous a crime; but still more to preserve in my distinct remembrance what I had observed of transition in character, and the reflections I had been led to make during the time I was a witness of the changes through which the French Revolution passed.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARMADUKE.	} Of the Band of Borderers.
OSWALD.	
WALLACE.	
LACY.	
LENNOX.	
HERBERT.	
WILFRED, Servant to MARMADUKE.	
Host.	
Forester.	
ELDRED, a Peasant.	
Peasant, Pilgrims, etc.	
IDONEA.	
Female Beggar.	
ELEANOR, Wife to ELDRED.	

SCENE—*Borders of England and Scotland.*

TIME—*The Reign of Henry III.*

Readers already acquainted with my Poems will recognise, in the following composition, some

eight or ten lines which I have not scrupled to retain in the places where they originally stood. It is proper, however, to add, that they would not have been used elsewhere, if I had foreseen the time when I might be induced to publish this Tragedy.

February 28, 1842.

## ACT I.

SCENE—*Road in a Wood.*

WALLACE and LACY.

*Lacy.* The troop will be impatient; let us hie  
Back to our post, and strip the Scottish Foray  
Of their rich Spoil, ere they recross the Border.  
—Pity that our young Chief will have no part  
In this good service.

*Wal.* Rather let us grieve  
That, in the undertaking which has caused  
His absence, he hath sought, whate'er his aim,  
Companionship with One of crooked ways,  
From whose perverted soul can come no good.

To our confiding, open-hearted, Leader.

*Lacy.* True; and, remembering how the  
Band have proved  
That Oswald finds small favour in our sight,  
Well may we wonder he has gained such power

Over our much-loved Captain.

*Wal.* I have heard  
Of some dark deed to which in early life  
His passion drove him—then a Voyager  
Upon the midland Sea. You knew his bearing  
In Palestine?

*Lacy.* Where he despised alike  
Mahommedan and Christian. But enough;  
Let us begone—the Band may else be foiled. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter MARMADUKE and WILFRED.*

*Wil.* Be cautious, my dear Master!  
*Mar.* I perceive  
That fear is like a cloak which old men  
huddle  
About their love, as if to keep it warm.



*Wil.* Nay, but I grieve that we should part. This Stranger,  
For such he is——

*Mar.* Your busy fancies, Wilfred,  
Might tempt me to a smile; but what of him?

*Wil.* You know that you have saved his life.

*Mar.* I know it.

*Wil.* And that he hates you!—Pardon me, perhaps  
That word was hasty.

*Mar.* Fy! no more of it.

*Wil.* Dear Master! gratitude's a heavy burden  
To a proud Soul.—Nobody loves this Oswald—  
Yourself, you do not love him.

*Mar.* I do more,  
I honour him. Strong feelings to his heart  
Are natural; and from no one can be learnt  
More of man's thoughts and ways than his experience

Has given him power to teach: and then  
for courage  
And enterprise—what perils hath he  
shunned?

What obstacles hath he failed to overcome?  
Answer these questions, from our common  
knowledge,  
And be at rest.

*Wil.* Oh, Sir!

*Mar.* Peace, my good Wilfred;  
Repair to Liddesdale, and tell the Band  
I shall be with them in two days, at farthest.

*Wil.* May He whose eye is over all protect you! [Exit.]

*Enter OSWALD (a bunch of plants in his hand).*

*Osw.* This wood is rich in plants and  
curious simples.

*Mar. (looking at them).* The wild rose,  
and the poppy, and the nightshade:  
Which is your favourite, Oswald?

*Osw.* That which, while it is  
Strong to destroy, is also strong to heal—

[Looking forward.]  
Not yet in sight!—We'll saunter here  
awhile;

They cannot mount the hill, by us unseen.

*Mar. (a letter in his hand).* It is no  
common thing when one like you

Performs these delicate services, and  
therefore

I feel myself much bounden to you, Oswald;  
'Tis a strange letter this!—You saw her  
write it?

*Osw.* And saw the tears with which she  
blotted it.

*Mar.* And nothing less would satisfy  
him?

*Osw.* No less;

For that another in his Child's affection  
Should hold a place, as if 'twere robbery,  
He seemed to quarrel with the very thought.  
Besides, I know not what strange prejudice  
Is rooted in his mind; this Band of ours,  
Which you've collected for the noblest ends,  
Along the confines of the Esk and Tweed  
To guard the Innocent—he calls us "Out-  
laws";

And, for yourself, in plain terms he asserts  
This garb was taken up that indolence  
Might want no cover, and rapacity  
Be better fed.

*Mar.* Ne'er may I own the heart  
That cannot feel for one, helpless as he is.

*Osw.* Thou know'st me for a Man not  
easily moved,

Yet was I grievously provoked to think  
Of what I witnessed.

*Mar.* This day will suffice  
To end her wrongs.

*Osw.* But if the blind Man's tale  
Should yet be true?

*Mar.* Would it were possible!  
Did not the soldier tell thee that himself,  
And others who survived the wreck, beheld  
The Baron Herbert perish in the waves  
Upon the coast of Cyprus?

*Osw.* Yes, even so,  
And I had heard the like before: in sooth  
The tale of this his quondam Barony  
Is cunningly devised; and, on the back  
Of his forlorn appearance, could not fail  
To make the proud and vain his tributaries,  
And stir the pulse of lazy charity.

The seigniors of Herbert are in Devon;  
We, neighbours of the Esk and Tweed:  
'tis much

The Arch-Impostor——

*Mar.* Treat him gently, Oswald;  
Though I have never seen his face, me-  
thinks,

There cannot come a day when I shall  
cease

To love him. I remember, when a Boy  
Of scarcely seven years' growth, beneath  
the Elm

That casts its shade over our village school,  
'Twas my delight to sit and hear Idonea  
Repeat her Father's terrible adventures,  
Till all the band of playmates wept together ;  
And that was the beginning of my love.  
And, through all converse of our later years,  
An image of this old Man still was present,  
When I had been most happy. Pardon me  
If this be idly spoken.

*Osw.* See, they come,  
Two Travellers !

*Mar. (points).* The woman is Idonea.

*Osw.* And leading Herbert.

*Mar.* We must let them pass—  
This thicket will conceal us.

[*They step aside.*]

*Enter IDONEA, leading HERBERT blind.*

*Idon.* Dear Father, you sigh deeply ;  
ever since

We left the willow shade by the brook-side,  
Your natural breathing has been troubled.

*Her.* Nay,  
You are too fearful ; yet must I confess,  
Our march of yesterday had better suited  
A firmer step than mine.

*Idon.* That dismal Moor—  
In spite of all the larks that cheered our  
path,

I never can forgive it : but how steadily  
You paced along, when the bewildering  
moonlight

Mocked me with many a strange fantastic  
shape !—

I thought the Convent never would appear ;  
It seemed to move away from us : and yet,  
That you are thus the fault is mine ; for the  
air

Was soft and warm, no dew lay on the grass,  
And midway on the waste ere night had  
fallen

I spied a Covert walled and roofed with  
sods—

A miniature ; belike some Shepherd-boy,  
Who might have found a nothing-doing hour  
Heavier than work, raised it : within that  
hut

We might have made a kindly bed of heath,  
And thankfully there rested side by side  
Wrapped in our cloaks, and, with recruited  
strength.

Have hailed the morning sun. But cheerily,  
Father,—

That staff of yours, I could almost have  
heart

To fling't away from you : you make no use  
Of me, or of my strength ;—come, let me feel  
That you do press upon me. There—indeed  
You are quite exhausted. Let us rest awhile  
On this green bank. [*He sits down.*]

*Her. (after some time).* Idonea, you are  
silent,

And I divine the cause.

*Idon.* Do not reproach me :  
I pondered patiently your wish and will  
When I gave way to your request ; and  
now,

When I behold the ruins of that face,  
Those eyeballs dark—dark beyond hope of  
light,

And think that they were blasted for my  
sake,

The name of Marmaduke is blown away :  
Father, I would not change that sacred  
feeling

For all this world can give.

*Her.* Nay, be composed :  
Few minutes gone a faintness overspread  
My frame, and I bethought me of two things  
I ne'er had heart to separate—my grave,  
And thee, my Child !

*Idon.* Believe me, honoured Sire !  
'Tis weariness that breeds these gloomy  
fancies,

And you mistake the cause : you hear the  
woods

Resound with music, could you see the sun.  
And look upon the pleasant face of  
Nature—

*Her.* I comprehend thee—I should be as  
cheerful

As if we two were twins ; two songsters  
bred

In the same nest, my spring-time one with  
thine.

My fancies, fancies if they be, are such  
As come, dear Child ! from a far deeper  
source

Than bodily weariness. While here we sit  
I feel my strength returning.—The bequest  
Of thy kind Patroness, which to receive  
We have thus far adventured, will suffice  
To save thee from the extreme of penury ;  
But when thy Father must lie down and die,  
How wilt thou stand alone ?

*Idon.* Is he not strong?  
Is he not valiant?

*Her.* Am I then so soon  
Forgotten? have my warnings passed so  
quickly  
Out of thy mind? My dear, my only,  
Child;  
Thou wouldst be leaning on a broken  
reed—

This Marmaduke—

*Idon.* O could you hear his voice:  
Alas! you do not know him. He is one  
(I wot not what ill tongue has wronged  
him with you)

All gentleness and love. His face bespeaks  
A deep and simple meekness: and that Soul,  
Which with the motion of a virtuous act  
Flashes a look of terror upon guilt,  
Is, after conflict, quiet as the ocean,  
By a miraculous finger, stilled at once.

*Her.* Unhappy Woman!

*Idon.* Nay, it was my duty  
Thus much to speak; but think not I  
forget—

Dear Father! how *could* I forget and live—  
You and the story of that doleful night  
When, Antioch blazing to her topmost  
towers,  
You rushed into the murderous flames, re-  
turned

Blind as the grave, but, as you oft have  
told me,

Clasping your infant Daughter to your heart.

*Her.* Thy Mother too!—scarce had I  
gained the door,  
I caught her voice; she threw herself upon  
me,

I felt thy infant brother in her arms;  
She saw my blasted face—a tide of soldiers  
That instant rushed between us, and I heard  
Her last death-shriek, distinct among a  
thousand.

*Idon.* Nay, Father, stop not; let me  
hear it all.

*Her.* Dear Daughter! precious relic of  
that time—

For my old age, it doth remain with thee  
To make it what thou wilt. Thou hast  
been told,

That when, on our return from Palestine,  
I found how my domains had been usurped,  
I took thee in my arms, and we began  
Our wanderings together. Providence  
At length conducted us to Rossland,—there,

Our melancholy story moved a Stranger  
To take thee to her home—and for myself,  
Soon after, the good Abbot of St. Cuth-  
bert's

Supplied my helplessness with food and  
raiment,

And, as thou know'st, gave me that humble  
Cot

Where now we dwell.—For many years I  
bore

Thy absence, till old age and fresh infirmities  
Exacted thy return, and our reunion.

I did not think that, during that long  
absence,

My Child, forgetful of the name of Herbert,  
Had given her love to a wild Freebooter,  
Who here, upon the borders of the Tweed,  
Doth prey alike on two distracted Countries,  
Traitor to both.

*Idon.* Oh, could you hear his voice! I  
I will not call on Heaven to vouch for me,  
But let this kiss speak what is in my heart.

*Enter a Peasant.*

*Pea.* Good morrow, Strangers! If you  
want a Guide,

Let me have leave to serve you!

*Idon.* My Companion  
Hath need of rest; the sight of Hut or  
Hostel

Would be most welcome.

*Pea.* Yon white hawthorn gained,  
You will look down into a dell, and there  
Will see an ash from which a sign-board  
hangs;

The house is hidden by the shade. Old  
Man,

You seem worn out with travel—shall I  
support you?

*Her.* I thank you; but, a resting-place  
so near,

'Twere wrong to trouble you.

*Pea.* God speed you both.  
[*Exit Peasant.*]

*Her.* Idonea, we must part. Be not  
alarmed—

'Tis but for a few days—a thought has  
struck me.

*Idon.* That I should leave you at this  
house, and thence

Proceed alone. It shall be so; for strength  
Would fail you ere our journey's end be  
reached.

[*Exit HERBERT supported by IDONEA.*]

*Re-enter MARMADUKE and OSWALD.*

*Mar.* This instant will we stop him——

*Osw.* Be not hasty,  
For, sometimes, in despite of my conviction,  
He tempted me to think the Story true ;  
'Tis plain he loves the Maid, and what he said

That savoured of aversion to thy name  
Appeared the genuine colour of his soul—  
Anxiety lest mischief should befall her  
After his death.

*Mar.* I have been much deceived.

*Osw.* But sure he loves the Maiden, and never love  
Could find delight to nurse itself so strangely,  
Thus to torment her with *inventions* !—  
death—

There must be truth in this.

*Mar.* Truth in his story !  
He must have felt it then, known what it was,

And in such wise to rack her gentle heart  
Had been a tenfold cruelty.

*Osw.* Strange pleasures  
Do we poor mortals cater for ourselves !  
To see him thus provoke her tenderness  
With tales of weakness and infirmity !  
I'd wager on his life for twenty years.

*Mar.* We will not waste an hour in such a cause.

*Osw.* Why, this is noble ! shake her off at once.

*Mar.* Her virtues are his instruments.—  
A Man

Who has so practised on the world's cold sense,

May well deceive his Child—what ! leave her thus,

A prey to a deceiver ?—no—no—no—  
'Tis but a word and then——

*Osw.* Something is here  
More than we see, or whence this strong aversion ?

Marmaduke ! I suspect unworthy tales  
Have reached his ear—you have had enemies.

*Mar.* Enemies !—of his own coinage.

*Osw.* That may be,  
But wherefore slight protection such as you  
Have power to yield ? perhaps he looks elsewhere.—  
I am perplexed.

*Mar.* What hast thou heard or seen ?  
*Osw.* No—no—the thing stands clear of mystery ;

(As you have said) he coins himself the slander

With which he taints her ear ;—for a plain reason ;

He dreads the presence of a virtuous man

Like you ; he knows your eye would search his heart,

Your justice stamp upon his evil deeds  
The punishment they merit. All is plain :  
It cannot be——

*Mar.* What cannot be ?

*Osw.* Yet that a Father  
Should in his love admit no rivalry,  
And torture thus the heart of his own Child——

*Mar.* Nay, you abuse my friendship !

*Osw.* Heaven forbid !—  
There was a circumstance, trifling indeed—  
It struck me at the time—yet I believe  
I never should have thought of it again  
But for the scene which we by chance have witnessed.

*Mar.* What is your meaning ?

*Osw.* Two days gone I saw,  
Though at a distance and he was disguised,

Hovering round Herbert's door, a man whose figure

Resembled much that cold voluptuary,  
The villain, Clifford. He hates you, and he knows

Where he can stab you deepest.

*Mar.* Clifford never  
Would stoop to skulk about a Cottage door—

It could not be.

*Osw.* And yet I now remember,  
That, when your praise was warm upon my tongue,

And the blind Man was told how you had rescued

A maiden from the ruffian violence  
Of this same Clifford, he became impatient  
And would not hear me.

*Mar.* No—it cannot be—

I dare not trust myself with such a thought—

Yet whence this strange aversion ? You are a man

Not used to rash conjectures——

*Osw.* If you deem it  
A thing worth further notice, we must act  
With caution, sift the matter artfully.

[*Exeunt MARMADUKE and OSWALD.*]

SCENE.—*The door of the Hostel.*

HERBERT, IDONEA, and Host.

*Her. (seated).* As I am dear to you, re-  
member, Child !  
This last request.

*Idon.* You know me, Sire ; farewell !

*Her.* And are you going then ? Come,  
come, Idonea,  
We must not part,—I have measured many  
a league  
When these old limbs had need of rest,—  
and now  
I will not play the sluggard.

*Idon.* Nay, sit down.

[*Turning to Host.*]

Good Host, such tendance as you would  
expect  
From your own Children, if yourself were  
sick,  
Let this old Man find at your hands ; poor  
Leader,

[*Looking at the dog.*]

We soon shall meet again. If thou neglect  
This charge of thine, then ill befall thee !—  
Look,

The little fool is loth to stay behind.  
Sir Host ! by all the love you bear to  
courtesy,

Take care of him, and feed the truant well.

*Host.* Fear not, I will obey you ;—but  
One so young,

And One so fair, it goes against my heart  
That you should travel unattended,  
Lady !—

I have a palfrey and a groom : the lad  
Shall squire you, (would it not be better,  
Sir ?)

And for less fee than I would let him run  
For any lady I have seen this twelvemonth.

*Idon.* You know, Sir, I have been too  
long your guard

Not to have learnt to laugh at little fears.  
Why, if a wolf should leap from out a  
thicket,

A look of mine would send him scouring  
back,

Unless I differ from the thing I am  
When you are by my side.

*Her.* Idonea, wolves  
Are not the enemies that move my fears.

*Idon.* No more, I pray, of this. Three  
days at farthest

Will bring me back—protect him, Saints—  
farewell ! [*Exit IDONEA.*]

*Host.* 'Tis never drought with us—St.  
Cuthbert and his Pilgrims,  
Thanks to them, are to us a stream of  
comfort :

Pity the Maiden did not wait a while ;  
She could not, Sir, have failed of com-  
pany.

*Her.* Now she is gone, I fain would call  
her back.

*Host (calling).* Holla !

*Her.* No, no, the business  
must be done.—

What means this riotous noise ?

*Host.* The villagers  
Are flocking in—a wedding festival—  
That's all—God save you, Sir.

*Enter OSWALD.*

*Osw.* Ha ! as I live,  
The Baron Herbert.

*Host.* Mercy, the Baron Herbert !  
*Osw.* So far into your journey ! on my  
life,

You are a lusty Traveller. But how fare  
you ?

*Her.* Well as the wreck I am permits.  
And you, Sir ?

*Osw.* I do not see Idonea.

*Her.* Dutiful Girl,  
She is gone before, to spare my weariness.  
But what has brought you hither ?

*Osw.* A slight affair,  
That will be soon despatched.

*Her.* Did Marmaduke  
Receive that letter ?

*Osw.* Be at peace.—The tie  
Is broken, you will hear no more of *him*.

*Her.* This is true comfort, thanks a  
thousand times !—

That noise !—would I had gone with her  
as far

As the Lord Clifford's Castle : I have heard  
That, in his milder moods, he has expressed  
Compassion for me. His influence is great  
With Henry, our good King ;—the Baron  
might

Have heard my suit, and urged my plea at  
Court.

No matter—he's a dangerous Man.—That noise !—

'Tis too disorderly for sleep or rest.  
Idonea would have fears for me,—the Con-  
vent

Will give me quiet lodging. You have a  
boy, good Host,  
And he must lead me back.

*Osw.* You are most lucky ;  
I have been waiting in the wood hard by  
For a companion—here he comes ; our  
journey

*Enter MARMADUKE.*

Lies on your way ; accept us as your  
Guides.

*Her.* Alas ! I creep so slowly.

*Osw.* Never fear ;  
We'll not complain of that.

*Her.* My limbs are stiff  
And need repose. Could you but wait an  
hour ?

*Osw.* Most willingly !—Come, let me  
lead you in,  
And, while you take your rest, think not of  
us ;

We'll stroll into the wood ; lean on my arm.

[*Conducts HERBERT into the house.*]

*Exit MARMADUKE.*

*Enter Villagers.*

*Osw. (to himself coming out of the Hostel).*  
I have prepared a most apt Instru-  
ment—

The Vagrant must, no doubt, be loitering  
somewhere

About this ground ; she hath a tongue well  
skilled,

By mingling natural matter of her own  
With all the daring fictions I have taught  
her,

To win belief, such as my plot requires.  
[*Exit OSWALD.*]

*Enter more Villagers, a Musician among  
them.*

*Host (to them).* Into the court, my Friend,  
—and perch yourself  
Aloft upon the elm-tree. Pretty Maids,  
Garlands and flowers, and cakes and merry  
thoughts,

Are here, to send the sun into the west  
More speedily than you belike would wish.

*SCENE changes to the Wood adjoining the  
Hostel—MARMADUKE and OSWALD  
entering.*

*Mar.* I would fain hope that we deceive  
ourselves :

When first I saw him sitting there, alone,  
It struck upon my heart I know not how.

*Osw.* To-day will clear up all.—You  
marked a Cottage,

That ragged Dwelling, close beneath a rock  
By the brook-side : it is the abode of One,  
A Maiden innocent till ensnared by Clifford,  
Who soon grew weary of her ; but, alas !  
What she had seen and suffered turned her  
brain.

Cast off by her Betrayer, she dwells alone,  
Nor moves her hands to any needful work :  
She eats her food which every day the  
peasants

Bring to her hut ; and so the Wretch has  
lived

Ten years ; and no one ever heard her  
voice ;

But every night at the first stroke of twelve  
She quits her house, and, in the neighbour-  
ing Churchyard

Upon the self-same spot, in rain or storm,  
She paces out the hour 'twixt twelve and  
one—

She paces round and round an Infant's  
grave,

And in the churchyard sod her feet have  
worn

A hollow ring ; they say it is knee-deep—  
Ah ! what is here ?

[*A female Beggar rises up, rubbing  
her eyes as if in sleep—a Child in  
her arms.*]

*Beg.* Oh ! Gentlemen, I thank you ;  
I've had the saddest dream that ever  
troubled

The heart of living creature.—My poor Babe  
Was crying, as I thought, crying for bread  
When I had none to give him ; whereupon,  
I put a slip of foxglove in his hand,  
Which pleased him so, that he was hushed  
at once :

When, into one of those same spotted bells  
A bee came darting, which the Child with  
joy

Imprisoned there, and held it to his ear,  
And suddenly grew black, as he would  
die.

*Mar.* We have no time for this, my babbling Gossip ;  
Here's what will comfort you.

[*Gives her money.*  
*Beg.* The Saints reward you  
For this good deed !—Well, Sirs, this passed away ;

And afterwards I fancied, a strange dog,  
Trotting alone along the beaten road,  
Came to my child as by my side he slept  
And, fondling, licked his face, then on a sudden

Snapped fierce to make a morsel of his head :  
But here he is, [*kissing the Child*] it must  
have been a dream.

*Osw.* When next inclined to sleep, take my advice,  
And put your head, good Woman, under cover.

*Beg.* Oh, sir, you would not talk thus, if you knew  
What life is this of ours, how sleep will master

The weary-worm.—You gentlefolk have got  
Warm chambers to your wish. I'd rather be

A stone than what I am.—But two nights gone,

The darkness overtook me—wind and rain  
Beat hard upon my head—and yet I saw  
A glow-worm, through the covert of the furze,

Shine calmly as if nothing ailed the sky :  
At which I half accused the God in Heaven.—  
You must forgive me.

*Osw.* Ay, and if you think  
The Fairies are to blame, and you should chide

Your favourite saint—no matter—this good day  
Has made amends.

*Beg.* Thanks to you both ; but, O sir !  
How would you like to travel on whole hours

As I have done, my eyes upon the ground,  
Expecting still, I knew not how, to find  
A piece of money glittering through the dust.

*Mar.* This woman is a prater. Pray, good Lady !

Do you tell fortunes ?

*Beg.* Oh Sir, you are like the rest.  
This Little-one—it cuts me to the heart—  
Well ! they might turn a beggar from their doors,

But there are Mothers who can see the Babe  
Here at my breast, and ask me where I bought it :

This they can do, and look upon my face—  
But you, Sir, should be kinder.

*Mar.* Come hither, Fathers,  
And learn what nature is from this poor Wretch !

*Beg.* Ay, Sir, there's nobody that feels for us.

Why now—but yesterday I overtook  
A blind old Greybeard and accosted him,  
I' th' name of all the Saints, and by the Mass

He should have used me better !—Charity !  
If you can melt a rock, he is your man ;  
But I'll be even with him—here again  
Have I been waiting for him.

*Osw.* Well, but softly,  
Who is it that hath wronged you ?

*Beg.* Mark you me ;  
I'll point him out ;—a Maiden is his guide,  
Lovely as Spring's first rose ; a little dog,  
Tied by a woollen cord, moves on before  
With look as sad as he were dumb ; the cur,  
I owe him no ill will, but in good sooth  
He does his Master credit.

*Mar.* As I live,  
'Tis Herbert and no other !

*Beg.* 'Tis a feast to see him,  
Lank as a ghost and tall, his shoulders bent,  
And long beard white with age—yet ever-  
more,

As if he were the only Saint on earth,  
He turns his face to heaven.

*Osw.* But why so violent  
Against this venerable Man ?

*Beg.* I'll tell you :  
He has the very hardest heart on earth ;  
I had as lief turn to the Friar's school  
And knock for entrance, in mid holiday.

*Mar.* But to your story.

*Beg.* I was saying, Sir—  
Well !—he has often spurned me like a toad,

But yesterday was worse than all ;—at last  
I overtook him, Sirs, my Babe and I,  
And begged a little aid for charity :  
But he was snappish as a cottage cur.  
Well then, says I—I'll out with it ; at which

I cast a look upon the Girl, and felt  
As if my heart would burst ; and so I left him.

*Osw.* I think, good Woman, you are the very person Whom, but some few days past, I saw in Eskdale,

At Herbert's door.

*Beg.* Ay; and if truth were known I have good business there.

*Osw.* I met you at the threshold, And he seemed angry.

*Beg.* Angry! well he might; And long as I can stir I'll dog him.—Yesterday,

To serve me so, and knowing that he owes The best of all he has to me and mine. But 'tis all over now.—That good old Lady Has left a power of riches; and, I say it, If there's a lawyer in the land, the knave Shall give me half.

*Osw.* What's this?—I fear, good Woman, You have been insolent.

*Beg.* And there's the Baron, I spied him skulking in his peasant's dress.

*Osw.* How say you? in disguise?—

*Mar.* But what's your business With Herbert or his Daughter?

*Beg.* Daughter! truly—But how's the day?—I fear, my little Boy, We've overslept ourselves.—Sirs, have you seen him? [*Offers to go.*]

*Mar.* I must have more of this;—you shall not stir

An inch, till I am answered. Know you aught

That doth concern this Herbert?

*Beg.* You are provoked, And will misuse me, Sir?

*Mar.* No trifling, Woman!

*Osw.* You are as safe as in a sanctuary; Speak.

*Mar.* Speak!

*Beg.* He is a most hard-hearted Man.

*Mar.* Your life is at my mercy.

*Beg.* Do not harm me, And I will tell you all!—You know not, Sir, What strong temptations press upon the Poor.

*Osw.* Speak out.

*Beg.* Oh Sir, I've been a wicked Woman.

*Osw.* Nay, but speak out!

*Beg.* He flattered me, and said What harvest it would bring us both; and so,

I parted with the Child.

*Mar.* Parted with whom?

*Beg.* Idonea, as he calls her; but the Girl Is mine.

*Mar.* Yours, Woman! are you Herbert's wife?

*Beg.* Wife, Sir! his wife—not I; my husband, Sir,

Was of Kirkoswald—many a snowy winter We've weathered out together. My poor Gilfred!

He has been two years in his grave.

*Mar.* Enough.

*Osw.* We've solved the riddle—Miscreant!

*Mar.* Do you,

Good Dame, repair to Liddesdale and wait For my return; be sure you shall have justice.

*Osw.* A lucky woman! go, you have done good service. [*Aside.*]

*Mar.* [*to himself.*] Eternal praises on the power that saved her!—

*Osw.* [*gives her money.*] Here's for your little boy—and when you christen him

I'll be his Godfather.

*Beg.* Oh Sir, you are merry with me, In grange or farm this Hundred scarcely owns

A dog that does not know me.—These good Folks,

For love of God, I must not pass their doors;

But I'll be back with my best speed: for you—

God bless and thank you both, my gentle Masters. [*Exit Beggar.*]

*Mar.* [*to himself.*] The cruel Viper!—Poor devoted Maid,

Now I do love thee.

*Osw.* I am thunderstruck.

*Mar.* Where is she—holla!

[*Calling to the Beggar, who returns; he looks at her steadfastly.*]

You are Idonea's mother?—

Nay, be not terrified—it does me good

To look upon you.

*Osw.* [*interrupting.*] In a peasant's dress You saw, who was it?

*Beg.* Nay, I dare not speak; He is a man, if it should come to his ears I never shall be heard of more.

*Osw.* Lord Clifford?



*Beg.* What can I do? believe me, gentle  
Sirs,  
I love her, though I dare not call her  
daughter.

*Osw.* Lord Clifford—did you see him  
talk with Herbert?

*Beg.* Yes, to my sorrow—under the  
great oak  
At Herbert's door—and when he stood  
beside

The blind Man—at the silent Girl he looked  
With such a look—it makes me tremble, Sir,  
To think of it.

*Osw.* Enough! you may depart.

*Mar.* (*to himself*). Father!—to God  
himself we cannot give

A holier name; and, under such a mask,  
To lead a Spirit, spotless as the blessed,  
To that abhorred den of brutish vice!—  
Oswald, the firm foundation of my life  
Is going from under me; these strange  
discoveries—

Looked at from every point of fear or hope,  
Duty, or love—involve, I feel, my ruin.

## ACT II.

SCENE—*A Chamber in the Hostel—  
OSWALD alone, rising from a Table on  
which he had been writing.*

*Osw.* They chose *him* for their Chief!  
—what covert part

He, in the preference, modest Youth, might  
take,

I neither know nor care. The insult bred  
More of contempt than hatred; both are  
flown;

That either e'er existed is my shame:  
'Twas a dull spark—a most unnatural fire  
That died the moment the air breathed  
upon it.

—These fools of feeling are mere birds of  
winter

That haunt some barren island of the north,  
Where, if a famishing man stretch forth his  
hand,

They think it is to feed them. I have left  
him

To solitary meditation;—now  
For a few swelling phrases, and a flash  
Of truth, enough to dazzle and to blind,  
And he is mine for ever—here he comes.

*Enter MARMADUKE.*

*Mar.* These ten years she has moved her  
lips all day  
And never speaks!

*Osw.* Who is it?

*Mar.* I have seen her.

*Osw.* Oh! the poor tenant of that ragged  
homestead,  
Her whom the Monster, Clifford, drove to  
madness.

*Mar.* I met a peasant near the spot; he  
told me,

These ten years she had sate all day alone  
Within those empty walls.

*Osw.* I too have seen her;  
Chancing to pass this way some six months  
gone,

At midnight, I betook me to the Church-  
yard:

The moon shone clear, the air was still, so  
still

The trees were silent as the graves beneath  
them.

Long did I watch, and saw her pacing round  
Upon the self-same spot, still round and  
round,

Her lips for ever moving.

*Mar.* At her door  
Rooted I stood; for, looking at the woman,  
I thought I saw the skeleton of Idonea.

*Osw.* But the pretended Father—

*Mar.* Earthly law  
Measures not crimes like his.

*Osw.* *We* rank not, happily,  
With those who take the spirit of their rule  
From that soft class of devotees who feel  
Reverence for life so deeply, that they spare  
The verminous brood, and cherish what  
they spare

While feeding on their bodies. Would  
that Idonea

Were present, to the end that we might hear  
What she can urge in his defence; she loves  
him.

*Mar.* Yes, loves him; 'tis a truth that  
multiplies

His guilt a thousand-fold.

*Osw.* 'Tis most perplexing:  
What must be done?

*Mar.* We will conduct her hither;  
These walls shall witness it—from first to  
last

He shall reveal himself.

*Osw.* Happy are we,  
Who live in these disputed tracts, that own  
No law but what each man makes for  
himself ;

Here justice has indeed a field of triumph.

*Mar.* Let us be gone and bring her  
hither ;—here

The truth shall be laid open, his guilt proved  
Before her face. The rest be left to me.

*Osw.* You will be firm : but though we  
well may trust

The issue to the justice of the cause,  
Caution must not be flung aside ; remember,  
Yours is no common life. Self-stationed  
here

Upon these savage confines, we have seen  
you

Stand like an isthmus 'twixt two stormy seas  
That oft have checked their fury at your  
bidding.

'Mid the deep holds of Solway's mossy  
waste,

Your single virtue has transformed a Band  
Of fierce barbarians into Ministers

Of peace and order. Aged men with tears  
Have blessed their steps, the fatherless retire  
For shelter to their banners. But it is,

As you must needs have deeply felt, it is  
In darkness and in tempest that we seek

The majesty of Him who rules the world.  
Benevolence, that has not heart to use

The wholesome ministry of pain and evil,  
Becomes at last weak and contemptible.

Your generous qualities have won due praise,  
But vigorous Spirits look for something  
more

Than Youth's spontaneous products ; and  
to-day

You will not disappoint them ; and here—  
after—

*Mar.* You are wasting words ; hear me  
then, once for all :

You are a Man—and therefore, if com-  
passion,

Which to our kind is natural as life,  
Be known unto you, you will love this

Woman,  
Even as I do ; but I should loathe the light,

If I could think one weak or partial  
feeling—

*Osw.* You will forgive me—

*Mar.* If I ever knew  
My heart, could penetrate its inmost core,  
'Tis at this moment.—Oswald, I have loved

To be the friend and father of the oppressed,  
A comforter of sorrow ;—there is something  
Which looks like a transition in my soul,  
And yet it is not.—Let us lead him hither.

*Osw.* Stoop for a moment ; 'tis an act  
of justice ;

And where's the triumph if the delegate  
Must fall in the execution of his office ?

The deed is done—if you will have it so—  
Here where we stand—that tribe of vulgar

wretches  
(You saw them gathering for the festival)

Rush in—the villains seize us—

*Mar.* Seize !

*Osw.* Yes, they—  
Men who are little given to sift and weigh—  
Would wreak on us the passion of the  
moment.

*Mar.* The cloud will soon disperse—fare-  
well—but stay,

Thou wilt relate the story.

*Osw.* Am I neither  
To bear a part in this Man's punishment,  
Nor be its witness ?

*Mar.* I had many hopes  
That were most dear to me, and some will  
bear

To be transferred to thee.

*Osw.* When I'm dishonoured !  
*Mar.* I would preserve thee. How may  
this be done ?

*Osw.* By showing that you look beyond  
the instant,

A few leagues hence we shall have open  
ground,

And nowhere upon earth is place so fit  
To look upon the deed. Before we enter

The barren Moor, hangs from a beetling  
rock

The shattered Castle in which Clifford oft  
Has held infernal orgies—with the gloom,

And very superstition of the place,  
Seasoning his wickedness. The Debauchee

Would there perhaps have gathered the first  
fruits

Of this mock Father's guilt.

*Enter Host conducting HERBERT.*

*Host.* The Baron Herbert  
Attends your pleasure.

*Osw.* (to Host). We are ready—  
(to HERBERT) Sir !

I hope you are refreshed.—I have just  
written

A notice for your Daughter, that she may know

What is become of you.—You'll sit down and sign it ;

'Twill glad her heart to see her father's signature.

[*Gives the letter he had written.*

*Her.* Thanks for your care.

[*Sits down and writes. Exit Host.*

*Osw. (aside to MARMADUKE).* Perhaps it would be useful

That you too should subscribe your name.

[*MARMADUKE overlooks HERBERT—then writes—examines the letter eagerly.*

*Mar.* I cannot leave this paper.

[*He puts it up, agitated.*

*Osw. (aside).* Dastard ! Come.

[*MARMADUKE goes towards HERBERT and supports him—MARMADUKE tremblingly beckons OSWALD to take his place.*

*Mar. (as he quits HERBERT).* There is a palsy in his limbs—he shakes.

[*Exeunt OSWALD and HERBERT—MARMADUKE following.*

SCENE changes to a Wood—a Group of Pilgrims and IDONEA with them.

*First Pil.* A grove of darker and more lofty shade I never saw.

*Sec. Pil.* The music of the birds Drops deadened from a roof so thick with leaves.

*Old Pil.* This news ! It made my heart leap up with joy.

*Idon.* I scarcely can believe it.

*Old Pil.* Myself, I heard The Sheriff read, in open Court, a letter Which purported it was the royal pleasure

The Baron Herbert, who, as was supposed, Had taken refuge in this neighbourhood, Should be forthwith restored. The hearing, Lady,

Filled my dim eyes with tears.—When I returned

From Palestine, and brought with me a heart,

Though rich in heavenly, poor in earthly, comfort,

I met your Father, then a wandering Outcast :

He had a Guide, a Shepherd's boy ; but grieved

He was that One so young should pass his youth

In such sad service ; and he parted with him.

We joined our tales of wretchedness together,

And begged our daily bread from door to door.

I talk familiarly to you, sweet Lady !

For once you loved me.

*Idon.* You shall back with me And see your Friend again. The good old Man

Will be rejoiced to greet you.

*Old Pil.* It seems but yesterday That a fierce storm o'ertook us, worn with travel,

In a deep wood remote from any town.

A cave that opened to the road presented A friendly shelter, and we entered in.

*Idon.* And I was with you ?

*Old Pil.* If indeed 'twas you— But you were then a tottering Little-one—

We sate us down. The sky grew dark and darker :

I struck my flint, and built up a small fire With rotten boughs and leaves, such as the winds

Of many autumns in the cave had piled. Meanwhile the storm fell heavy on the woods ;

Our little fire sent forth a cheering warmth And we were comforted, and talked of comfort ;

But 'twas an angry night, and o'er our heads

The thunder rolled in peals that would have made

A sleeping man uneasy in his bed.

O Lady, you have need to love your Father. His voice—methinks I hear it now, his voice

When, after a broad flash that filled the cave,

He said to me, that he had seen his Child,

A face (no cherub's face more beautiful) Revealed by lustre brought with it from

Heaven ;

And it was you, dear Lady !

*Idon.* God be praised, That I have been his comforter till now !

And will be so through every change of fortune

And every sacrifice his peace requires,—  
Let us be gone with speed, that he may hear

These joyful tidings from no lips but mine.  
[*Exeunt IDONEA and Pilgrims.*]

SCENE,—*The Area of a half-ruined Castle—on one side the entrance to a dungeon—OSWALD and MARMADUKE pacing backwards and forwards.*

*Mar.* 'Tis a wild night.

*Osw.* I'd give my cloak and bonnet  
For sight of a warm fire.

*Mar.* The wind blows keen ;  
My hands are numb.

*Osw.* Ha ! ha ! 'tis nipping cold.  
[*Blowing his fingers.*]

I long for news of our brave Comrades ;  
Lacy

Would drive those Scottish Rovers to their dens

If once they blew a horn this side the Tweed.

*Mar.* I think I see a second range of  
Towers ;

This castle has another Area—come,  
Let us examine it.

*Osw.* 'Tis a bitter night ;  
I hope Idonea is well housed. That horse-  
man,

Who at full speed swept by us where the wood

Roared in the tempest, was within an ace  
Of sending to his grave our precious

Charge :

That would have been a vile mischance.

*Mar.* It would.

*Osw.* Justice had been most cruelly de-  
frauded.

*Mar.* Most cruelly.

*Osw.* As up the steep we clomb,  
I saw a distant fire in the north-east ;

I took it for the blaze of Cheviot Beacon :  
With proper speed our quarters may be  
gained

To-morrow evening.

[*Looks restlessly towards the mouth of the  
dungeon.*]

*Mar.* When, upon the plank,  
I had led him 'cross the torrent, his voice  
blessed me :

You could not hear, for the foam beat the  
rocks

With deafening noise,—the benediction fell  
Back on himself ; but changed into a curse.

*Osw.* As well indeed it might.

*Mar.* And this you deem  
The fittest place ?

*Osw.* (*aside*). He is growing pitiful.

*Mar.* (*listening*). What an odd moan-  
ing that is !—

*Osw.* Mighty odd

The wind should pipe a little, while we  
stand

Cooling our heels in this way !—I'll begin  
And count the stars.

*Mar.* (*still listening*). That dog of his,  
you are sure,

Could not come after us—he *must* have  
perished ;

The torrent would have dashed an oak to  
splinters.

You said you did not like his looks—that  
he

Would trouble us ; if he were here again,  
I swear the sight of him would quail me  
more

Than twenty armies.

*Osw.* How ?

*Mar.* The old blind Man,  
When you had told him the mischance, was  
troubled

Even to the shedding of some natural tears  
Into the torrent over which he hung,

Listening in vain.

*Osw.* He has a tender heart !

[*OSWALD offers to go down into the  
dungeon.*]

*Mar.* How now, what mean you ?

*Osw.* Truly, I was going  
To waken our stray Baron. Were there not  
A farm or dwelling-house within five leagues,  
We should deserve to wear a cap and bells,  
Three good round years, for playing the  
fool here

In such a night as this.

*Mar.* Stop, stop.

*Osw.* Perhaps,  
You'd better like we should descend  
together,

And lie down by his side—what say you  
to it ?

Three of us—we should keep each other  
warm :

I'll answer for it that our four-legged friend

Shall not disturb us; further I'll not engage;  
Come, come, for manhood's sake!

*Mar.* These drowsy shiverings,  
This mortal stupor which is creeping over me,  
What do they mean? were this my single  
body

Opposed to armies, not a nerve would  
tremble:

Why do I tremble now?—Is not the depth  
Of this Man's crimes beyond the reach of  
thought?

And yet, in plumbing the abyss for judg-  
ment,

Something I strike upon which turns my  
mind

Back on herself, I think, again—my breast  
Concentres all the terrors of the Universe:  
I look at him and tremble like a child.

*Osw.* Is it possible?

*Mar.* One thing you noticed not:  
Just as we left the glen a clap of thunder  
Burst on the mountains with hell-rousing  
force.

This is a time, said he, when guilt may  
shudder;

But there's a Providence for them who walk  
In helplessness, when innocence is with  
them.

At this audacious blasphemy, I thought  
The spirit of vengeance seemed to ride the  
air.

*Osw.* Why are you not the man you  
were that moment?

[*He draws MARMADUKE to the dun-  
geon.*]

*Mar.* You say he was asleep,—look at  
this arm,  
And tell me if 'tis fit for such a work.  
Oswald, Oswald!

[*Leans upon OSWALD.*]

*Osw.* This is some sudden seizure!

*Mar.* A most strange faintness,—will you  
hunt me out  
A draught of water?

*Osw.* Nay, to see you thus  
Moves me beyond my bearing.—I will try  
To gain the torrent's brink.

[*Exit OSWALD.*]

*Mar.* (*after a pause.*) It seems an age  
Since that Man left me.—No, I am not lost.

*Her.* (*at the mouth of the dungeon.*) Give  
me your hand; where are you,  
Friends? and tell me  
How goes the night.

*Mar.* 'Tis hard to measure time.  
In such a weary night, and such a place.

*Her.* I do not hear the voice of my friend  
Oswald.

*Mar.* A minute past, he went to fetch a  
draught  
Of water from the torrent. 'Tis, you'll say,  
A cheerless beverage.

*Her.* How good it was in you  
To stay behind!—Hearing at first no  
answer,  
I was alarmed.

*Mar.* No wonder; this is a place  
That well may put some fears into *your*  
heart.

*Her.* Why so? a roofless rock had been  
a comfort,  
Storm-beaten and bewildered as we were;  
And in a night like this, to lend your cloaks  
To make a bed for me!—My Girl will weep  
When she is told of it.

*Mar.* This Daughter of yours  
Is very dear to you.

*Her.* Oh! but you are young;  
Over your head twice twenty years must roll,  
With all their natural weight of sorrow and  
pain,  
Ere can be known to you how much a Father  
May love his Child.

*Mar.* Thank you, old Man,  
for this! [*Aside.*]

*Her.* Fallen am I, and worn out, a use-  
less Man;

Kindly have you protected me to-night,  
And no return have I to make but prayers;  
May you in age be blest with such a  
daughter!—

When from the Holy Land I had returned  
Sightless, and from my heritage was driven,  
A wretched Outcast—but this strain of  
thought  
Would lead me to talk fondly.

*Mar.* Do not fear;  
Your words are precious to my ears; go  
on.

*Her.* You will forgive me, but my heart  
runs over.

When my old Leader slipped into the flood  
And perished, what a piercing outcry you  
Sent after him. I have loved you ever since.  
You start—where are we?

*Mar.* Oh, there is no danger;  
The cold blast struck me.

*Her.* 'Twas a foolish question.

*Mar.* But when you were an Outcast?—

Heaven is just ;

Your piety would not miss its due reward ;  
The little Orphan then would be your  
succour,

And do good service, though she knew it  
not.

*Her.* I turned me from the dwellings of  
my Fathers,

Where none but those who trampled on my  
rights

Seemed to remember me. To the wide  
world

I bore her, in my arms ; her looks won  
pity ;

She was my Raven in the wilderness,  
And brought me food. Have I not cause  
to love her ?

*Mar.* Yes.

*Her.* More than ever Parent loved  
a Child ?

*Mar.* Yes, yes.

*Her.* I will not murmur, merciful God !  
I will not murmur ; blasted as I have been,  
Thou hast left me ears to hear my  
Daughter's voice,

And arms to fold her to my heart. Sub-  
missively

Thee I adore, and find my rest in faith.

*Enter OSWALD.*

*Osw.* Herbert !—confusion ! . (*aside*).

Here it is, my Friend,

[*Presents the Horn.*

A charming beverage for you to carouse,  
This bitter night.

*Her.* Ha ! Oswald ! ten bright crosses  
I would have given, not many minutes gone,  
To have heard your voice.

*Osw.* Your couch, I fear, good Baron,  
Has been but comfortless ; and yet that  
place,

When the tempestuous wind first drove us  
hither,

Felt warm as a wren's nest. You'd better  
turn

And under covert rest till break of day,  
Or till the storm abate.

(*To MARMADUKE aside*). He has restored  
you.

No doubt you have been nobly entertained?  
*But soft !*—how came he forth ? The

Night-mare Conscience  
Has driven him out of harbour ?

*Mar.*

I believe

You have guessed right.

*Her.* The trees renew their murmur :  
Come, let us house together.

[*OSWALD conducts him to the dungeon.*

*Osw.* (*returns*). Had I not  
Esteemed you worthy to conduct the affair

To its most fit conclusion, do you think  
I would so long have struggled with my

Nature,

And smothered all that's man in me?—  
away !—

[*Looking towards the dungeon.*

This man's the property of him who best  
Can feel his crimes. I have resigned a

privilege ;

It now becomes my duty to resume it.

*Mar.* Touch not a finger—

*Osw.* What then must be done ?

*Mar.* Which way soe'er I turn, I am  
perplexed.

*Osw.* Now, on my life, I grieve for you.  
The misery

Of doubt is insupportable. Pity, the facts  
Did not admit of stronger evidence ;

Twelve honest men, plain men, would set  
us right ;

Their verdict would abolish these weak  
scruples.

*Mar.* Weak ! I am weak—there does  
my torment lie,

Feeding itself.

*Osw.* Verily, when he said

How his old heart would leap to hear her  
steps,

You thought his voice the echo of Idonea's.

*Mar.* And never heard a sound so  
terrible.

*Osw.* Perchance you think so now ?

*Mar.* I cannot do it :

Twice did I spring to grasp his withered  
throat,

When such a sudden weakness fell upon  
me,

I could have dropped asleep upon his  
breast.

*Osw.* Justice—is there not thunder in  
the word ?

Shall it be law to stab the petty robber  
Who aims but at our purse ; and shall this

Parricide—

Worse is he far, far worse (if foul dishonour  
Be worse than death) to that confiding  
Creature

Whom he to more than filial love and duty  
Hath falsely trained—shall he fulfil his  
purpose?

But you are fallen.

*Mar.* Fallen should I be indeed—  
Murder—perhaps asleep, blind, old, alone,  
Betrayed, in darkness! Here to strike the  
blow—

Away! away! —

[*Flings away his sword.*]

*Osw.* Nay, I have done with you:  
We'll lead him to the Convent. He shall  
live,

And she shall love him. With unquestioned  
title

He shall be seated in his Barony,  
And we too chant the praise of his good  
deeds.

I now perceive we do mistake our  
masters,  
And most despise the men who best can  
teach us:

Henceforth it shall be said that bad men  
only

Are brave: Clifford is brave; and that old  
Man

Is brave.

[*Taking MARMADUKE's sword and  
giving it to him.*]

To Clifford's arms he would have led  
His Victim—haply to this desolate house.

*Mar. (advancing to the dungeon).* It  
must be ended! —

*Osw.* Softly; do not rouse him;  
He will deny it to the last. He lies  
Within the Vault, a spear's length to the  
left.

[*MARMADUKE descends to the dungeon.  
(Alone.)* The Villains rose in mutiny to  
destroy me;

I could have quelled the Cowards, but this  
Stripling

Must needs step in, and save my life. The  
look

With which he gave the boon—I see it  
now!

The same that tempted me to loathe the  
gift.—

For this old venerable Greybeard—faith  
'Tis his own fault if he hath got a face  
Which doth play tricks with them that  
look on it;

'Twas this that put it in my thoughts—that  
countenance—

His staff—his figure—Murder!—what, of  
whom?

We kill a worn-out horse, and who but  
women

Sigh at the deed? Hew down a withered  
tree,

And none look grave but dotards. He  
may live

To thank me for this service. Rainbow  
arches,

Highways of dreaming passion, have too  
long,

Young as he is, diverted wish and hope  
From the unpretending ground we mortals  
tread;—

Then shatter the delusion, break it up  
And set him free. What follows? I have  
learned

That things will work to ends the slaves o'  
the world

Do never dream of. I have been what he—  
This Boy—when he comes forth with  
bloody hands—

Might envy, and am now,—but he shall  
know

What I am now—

[*Goes and listens at the dungeon.*]

Praying or parleying?—tut!  
Is he not eyesless? He has been half-dead  
These fifteen years—

*Enter female Beggar with two or three of  
her Companions.*

(*Turning abruptly.*) *Ha!* speak—what  
Thing art thou?

(*Recognises her.*) Heavens! my good  
Friend! [*To her.*]

*Beg.* Forgive me, gracious Sir!—

*Osw. (to her companions).* Begone, ye  
Slaves, or I will raise a whirlwind  
And send ye dancing to the clouds, like  
leaves. [*They retire affrighted.*]

*Beg.* Indeed we meant no harm; we  
lodge sometimes

In this deserted Castle—I repent me.

[*OSWALD goes to the dungeon—listens  
—returns to the Beggar.*]

*Osw.* Woman, thou hast a helpless In-  
fant—keep

Thy secret for its sake, or verily  
That wretched life of thine shall be the  
forfeit.

*Beg.* I do repent me, Sir; I fear the  
curse

Of that blind Man. 'Twas not your money, sir——

*Osw.* Begone !

*Beg. (going).* There is some wicked deed in hand : [Aside.]

Would I could find the old Man and his Daughter. [Exit Beggar.]

MARMADUKE *re-enters from the dungeon.*

*Osw.* It is all over then ;—your foolish fears

Are hushed to sleep, by your own act and deed,

Made quiet as he is.

*Mar.* Why came you down ?  
And when I felt your hand upon my arm  
And spake to you, why did you give no answer ?

Feared you to waken him ? he must have been

In a deep sleep. I whispered to him thrice.  
There are the strangest echoes in that place !

*Osw.* Tut ! let them gabble till the day of doom.

*Mar.* Scarcely, by groping, had I reached the Spot,

When round my wrist I felt a cord drawn tight,

As if the blind Man's dog were pulling at it.

*Osw.* But after that ?

*Mar.* The features of Idonea Lurked in his face——

*Osw.* Psha ! Never to these eyes

Will retribution show itself again

With aspect so inviting. Why forbid me To share your triumph ?

*Mar.* Yes, her very look, Smiling in sleep——

*Osw.* A pretty feat of Fancy !

*Mar.* Though but a glimpse, it sent me to my prayers.

*Osw.* Is he alive ?

*Mar.* What mean you ? who alive ?

*Osw.* Herbert ! since you will have it, Baron Herbert ;

He who will gain his Seignory when Idonea Hath become Clifford's harlot—is he living ?

*Mar.* The old Man in that dungeon is alive.

*Osw.* Henceforth, then, will I never in camp or field

Obey you more. Your weakness, to the Band,

Shall be proclaimed : brave Men, they all shall hear it.

You a protector of humanity !

Avenger you of outraged innocence !

*Mar.* 'Twas dark—dark as the grave ; yet did I see,

Saw him—his face turned toward me ; and I tell thee

Idonea's filial countenance was there

To baffle me—it put me to my prayers.

Upwards I cast my eyes, and, through a crevice,

Beheld a star twinkling above my head,

And, by the living God, I could not do it.

[Sinks exhausted.]

*Osw. (to himself).* Now may I perish if this turn do more

Than make me change my course.

(To MARMADUKE.) Dear Marmaduke, My words were rashly spoken ; I recall them :

I feel my error ; shedding human blood Is a most serious thing.

*Mar.* Not I alone, Thou too art deep in guilt.

*Osw.* We have indeed Been most presumptuous. There is guilt in this,

Else could so strong a mind have ever known

These trepidations ? Plain it is that Heaven Has marked out this foul Wretch as one whose crimes

Must never come before a mortal judgment-seat,

Or be chastised by mortal instruments.

*Mar.* A thought that's worth a thousand worlds !

[Goes towards the dungeon.]

*Osw.* I grieve That, in my zeal, I have caused you so much pain.

*Mar.* Think not of that ! 'tis over—we are safe.

*Osw. (as if to himself, yet speaking aloud).* The truth is hideous, but how stifled ?

[Turning to MARMADUKE.]

Give me your sword—nay, here are stones and fragments,

The least of which would beat out a man's brains ;

Or you might drive your head against that wall.

No ! this is not the place to hear the tale :



It should be told you pinioned in your bed,  
Or on some vast and solitary plain  
Blown to you from a trumpet.

*Mar.* Why talk thus?  
Whate'er the monster brooding in your  
breast  
I care not : fear I have none, and cannot  
fear—

[*The sound of a horn is heard.*  
That horn again—'Tis some one of our  
Troop ;

What do they here? Listen !  
*Osw.* What ! dogged like thieves !

*Enter WALLACE and LACY, etc.*

*Lacy.* You are found at last, thanks to  
the vagrant Troop  
For not misleading us.

*Osw. (looking at WALLACE).* That  
subtle Greybeard—  
I'd rather see my father's ghost.

*Lacy (to MARMADUKE).* My Captain,  
We come by order of the Band. Belike  
You have not heard that Henry has at last  
Dissolved the Barons' League, and sent  
abroad

His Sheriffs with fit force to reinstate  
The genuine owners of such Lands and  
Baronies

As, in these long commotions, have been  
seized.

His Power is this way tending. It befits us  
To stand upon our guard, and with our  
swords

Defend the innocent.

*Mar.* *Lacy!* we look  
But at the surfaces of things ; we hear  
Of towns in flames, fields ravaged, young  
and old

Driven out in troops to want and nakedness ;  
Then grasp our swords and rush upon a cure  
That flatters us, because it asks not thought :  
The deeper malady is better hid ;  
The world is poisoned at the heart.

*Lacy.* What mean you?  
*Wal. (whose eye has been fixed suspiciously  
upon OSWALD).* Ay, what is it you  
mean?

*Mar.* Hark'e, my Friends ;—  
[*Appearing gay.*

Were there a Man who, being weak and  
helpless  
And most forlorn, should bribe a Mother,  
pressed

By penury, to yield him up her Daughter,  
A little Infant, and instruct the Babe,  
Prattling upon his knee, to call him  
Father—

*Lacy.* Why, if his heart be tender, that  
offence  
I could forgive him.

*Mar. (going on).* And should he make  
the Child

An instrument of falsehood, should he teach  
her

To stretch her arms, and dim the gladsome  
light

Of infant playfulness with piteous looks  
Of misery that was not—

*Lacy.* Troth, 'tis hard—  
But in a world like ours—

*Mar. (changing his tone).* This self-  
same Man—

Even while he printed kisses on the cheek  
Of this poor Babe, and taught its innocent  
tongue

To lisp the name of Father—could he look  
To the unnatural harvest of that time

When he should give her up, a Woman  
grown,

To him who bid the highest in the market  
Of foul pollution—

*Lacy.* The whole visible world  
Contains not such a Monster !

*Mar.* For this purpose  
Should he resolve to taint her Soul by means  
Which bathe the limbs in sweat to think of  
them ;

Should he, by tales which would draw tears  
from iron,

Work on her nature, and so turn compas-  
sion

And gratitude to ministers of vice,  
And make the spotless spirit of filial love  
Prime mover in a plot to damn his Victim  
Both soul and body—

*Wal.* 'Tis too horrible ;  
Oswald, what say you to it?

*Lacy.* Hew him down,  
And fling him to the ravens.

*Mar.* But his aspect  
It is so meek, his countenance so venerable.

*Wal. (with an appearance of mistrust).*  
But how, what say you, Oswald?

*Lacy (at the same moment).* Stab him,  
were it

Before the Altar.  
*Mar.* What, if he were sick,

Tottering upon the very verge of life,  
And old, and blind——

*Lacy.*

Blind, say you?

*Osw. (coming forward).* Are we Men,  
Or own we baby Spirits? Genuine cour-  
age

Is not an accidental quality,  
A thing dependent for its casual birth  
On opposition and impediment.  
Wisdom, if Justice speak the word, beats  
down

The giant's strength; and, at the voice of  
Justice,  
Spare not the worm. The giant and the  
worm——

She weighs them in one scale. The wiles  
of woman,

And craft of age, seducing reason, first  
Made weakness a protection, and obscured  
The moral shapes of things. His tender  
cries

And helpless innocence——do they protect  
The infant lamb? and shall the infirmi-  
ties,

Which have enabled this enormous Culprit  
To perpetrate his crimes, serve as a Sanc-  
tuary

To cover him from punishment? Shame!  
——Justice,

Admitting no resistance, bends alike  
The feeble and the strong. She needs not  
here

Her bonds and chains, which make the  
mighty feeble.

——We recognise in this old Man a victim  
Prepared already for the sacrifice.

*Lacy.* By heaven, his words are reason!

*Osw.*

Yes, my Friends,

His countenance is meek and venerable;  
And, by the Mass, to see him at his  
prayers!——

I am of flesh and blood, and may I perish  
When my heart does not ache to think of  
it!——

Poor Victim! not a virtue under heaven  
But what was made an engine to ensnare  
thee;

But yet I trust, Idonea, thou art safe.

*Lacy.* Idonea!

*Wal.* How! what? your Idonea?

To MARMADUKE.

*Mar.*

*Mine;*

But now no longer mine. You know Lord  
Clifford;

He is the Man to whom the Maiden——  
pure

As beautiful, and gentle and benign,  
And in her ample heart loving even me——  
Was to be yielded up.

*Lacy.*

Now, by the head

Of my own child, this Man must die; my  
hand,

A worthier wanting, shall itself entwine  
In his grey hairs!——

*Mar. (to LACY).* I love the Father in  
thee.

You know me, Friends; I have a heart to  
feel,

And I have felt, more than perhaps be-  
comes me

Or duty sanctions.

*Lacy.*

We will have ample justice.

Who are we, Friends? Do we not live on  
ground

Where Souls are self-defended, free to  
grow

Like mountain oaks rocked by the stormy  
wind.

Mark the Almighty Wisdom, which decreed  
This monstrous crime to be laid open——  
*here.*

Where Reason has an eye that she can  
use,

And Men alone are Umpires. To the  
Camp

He shall be led, and there, the Country  
round

All gathered to the spot, in open day  
Shall Nature be avenged.

*Osw.*

'Tis nobly thought;

His death will be a monument for ages.

*Mar. (to LACY).*

I thank you for that

hint. He shall be brought

Before the Camp, and would that best and  
wisest

Of every country might be present. There,  
His crime shall be proclaimed; and for the  
rest

It shall be done as Wisdom shall decide:  
Meanwhile, do you two hasten back and  
see

That all is well prepared.

*Wal.*

We will obey you.

(*Aside.*) But softly! we must look a little  
nearer.

*Mar.*

Tell where you found us

future time

I will explain the cause.

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT III.

SCENE—*The door of the Hostel, a group of Pilgrims as before; IDONEA and the Host among them.*

*Host.* Lady, you'll find your Father at the Convent

As I have told you : He left us yesterday With two Companions ; one of them, as seemed,

His most familiar Friend. (*Going.*) There was a letter

Of which I heard them speak, but that I fancy

Has been forgotten.

*Idon.* (*to Host.*) Farewell !

*Host.* Gentle pilgrims, St. Cuthbert speed you on your holy errand.  
[*Exeunt IDONEA and Pilgrims.*]

SCENE—*A desolate Moor.*

OSWALD (*alone*).

*Osw.* Carry him to the Camp ! Yes, to the Camp.

Oh, Wisdom ! a most wise resolve ! and then,

That half a word should blow it to the winds !

This last device must end my work.—  
Methinks

It were a pleasant pastime to construct A scale and table of belief—as thus—  
Two columns, one for passion, one for proof ;

Each rises as the other falls : and first, Passion a unit and *against* us—proof—  
Nay, we must travel in another path, Or we're stuck fast for ever ;—passion, then,

Shall be a unit for us ; proof—no, passion ! We'll not insult thy majesty by time, Person, and place—the where, the when, the how,

And all particulars that dull brains require To constitute the spiritless shape of Fact, They bow to, calling the idol, Demonstration.

A whipping to the Moralists who preach That misery is a sacred thing : for me, I know no cheaper engine to degrade a man,

Nor any half so sure. This Stripling's mind

Is shaken till the dregs float on the surface ; And, in the storm and anguish of the heart, He talks of a transition in his Soul, And dreams that he is happy. We dissect The senseless body, and why not the mind ?—

These are strange sights—the mind of man, upturned,

Is in all natures a strange spectacle ; In some a hideous one—hem ! shall I stop ?

No.—Thoughts and feelings will sink deep, but then

They have no substance. Pass but a few minutes,

And something shall be done which Memory May touch, when'er her Vassals are at work.

*Enter MARMADUKE, from behind.*

*Osw.* (*turning to meet him.*) But listen, for my peace—

*Mar.* Why, I believe you.

*Osw.* But hear the proofs—

*Mar.* Ay, prove that when two peas Lie snugly in a pod, the pod must then Be larger than the peas—prove this—'twere matter

Worthy the hearing. Fool was I to dream It ever could be otherwise !

*Osw.* Last night When I returned with water from the brook, I overheard the Villains—every word Like red-hot iron burnt into my heart. Said one, "It is agreed on. The blind Man

Shall feign a sudden illness, and the Girl, Who on her journey must proceed alone, Under pretence of violence, be seized. She is," continued the detested Slave,

"She is right willing—strange if she were not !—

They say, Lord Clifford is a savage man ; But, faith, to see him in his silken tunic, Fitting his low voice to the minstrel's harp, There's witchery in't. I never knew a maid

That could withstand it. 'True,' continued he,

"When we arranged the affair, she wept a little

(Not the less welcome to my Lord for that) And said, 'My Father he will have it so.'"

*Mar.* I am your hearer.

*Osw.* This I caught, and more  
That may not be retold to any ear,  
The obstinate bolt of a small iron door  
Detained them near the gateway of the  
Castle.

By a dim lantern's light I saw that wreaths  
Of flowers were in their hands, as if  
designed

For festive decoration ; and they said,  
With brutal laughter and most foul allusion,  
That they should share the banquet with  
their Lord

And his new Favourite.

*Mar.* Misery !—

*Osw.* I knew  
How you would be disturbed by this dire  
news,

And therefore chose this solitary Moor,  
Here to impart the tale, of which, last  
night,

I strove to ease my mind, when our two  
Comrades,  
Commissioned by the Band, burst in upon  
us.

*Mar.* Last night, when moved to lift the  
avenging steel,  
I did believe all things were shadows—yea,  
Living or dead all things were bodiless,  
Or but the mutual mockeries of body,  
Till that same star summoned me back  
again.

Now I could laugh till my ribs ached. Oh  
Fool !

To let a creed, built in the heart of things,  
Dissolve before a twinkling atom !—Oswald,  
I could fetch lessons out of wiser schools  
Than you have entered, were it worth the  
pains.

Young as I am, I might go forth a teacher,  
And you should see how deeply I could  
reason

Of love in all its shapes, beginnings, ends ;  
Of moral qualities in their diverse aspects ;  
Of actions, and their laws and tendencies.

*Osw.* You take it as it merits—

*Mar.* One a King,  
General or Cham, Sultan or Emperor,  
Strews twenty acres of good meadow-ground  
With carcases, in lineament and shape  
And substance, nothing differing from his  
own,

But that they cannot stand up of them-  
selves ;

Another sits i' th' sun, and by the hour

Floats kingcups in the brook—a Hero one  
We call, and scorn the other as Time's  
spendthrift ;

But have they not a world of common  
ground

To occupy—both fools, or wise alike,  
Each in his way ?

*Osw.* Troth, I begin to think so.

*Mar.* Now for the corner-stone of my  
philosophy :

I would not give a denier for the man  
Who, on such provocation as this earth  
Yields, could not chuck his babe beneath  
the chin,

And send it with a fillip to its grave.

*Osw.* Nay, you leave me behind.

*Mar.* That such a One,  
So pious in demeanour ! in his look  
So saintly and so pure !—Hark'e, my  
Friend,

I'll plant myself before Lord Clifford's  
Castle,

A surly mastiff kennels at the gate,  
And he shall howl and I will laugh, a  
medley

Most tunable.

*Osw.* In faith, a pleasant scheme ;  
But take your sword along with you, for  
that

Might in such neighbourhood find seemly  
use.—

But first, how wash our hands of this old  
Man ?

*Mar.* Oh yes, that mole, that viper in  
the path ;

Plague on my memory, him I had forgot-  
ten.

*Osw.* You know we left him sitting—see  
him yonder.

*Mar.* Ha ! ha !—

*Osw.* As 'twill be but a moment's work,  
I will stroll on ; you follow when 'tis done.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes to another part of the Moor  
at a short distance—HERBERT is dis-  
covered seated on a stone.

*Her.* A sound of laughter, too !—'tis  
well—I feared,

The Stranger had some pitiable sorrow  
Pressing upon his solitary heart.

Hush !—'tis the feeble and earth-loving  
wind

That creeps along the bells of the crisp heather.

Alas ! 'tis cold—I shiver in the sunshine—  
What can this mean ? There is a psalm  
that speaks

Of God's parental mercies—with Idonea  
I used to sing it.—Listen !—what foot is  
there ?

*Enter MARMADUKE.*

*Mar. (aside—looking at HERBERT).*  
And I have loved this Man ! and  
she hath loved him !

And I loved her, and she loves the Lord  
Clifford !

And there it ends ;—if this be not enough  
To make mankind merry for evermore,  
Then plain it is as day, that eyes were  
made

For a wise purpose—verily to weep with !  
*(Looking round.*

A pretty prospect this, a masterpiece  
Of Nature, finished with most curious skill !  
*(To HERBERT.)* Good Baron, have you ever  
practised tillage ?

Pray tell me what this land is worth by the  
acre ?

*Her.* How glad I am to hear your voice !  
I know not

Wherein I have offended you ;—last night  
I found in you the kindest of Protectors ;  
This morning, when I spoke of weariness,  
You from my shoulder took my scrip and  
threw it

About your own ; but for these two hours  
past

Once only have you spoken, when the lark  
Whirled from among the fern beneath our  
feet,

And I, no coward in my better days,  
Was almost terrified.

*Mar.* That's excellent !—  
So, you bethought you of the many ways  
In which a man may come to his end, whose  
crimes

Have roused all Nature up against him—  
pshaw !—

*Her.* For mercy's sake, is nobody in  
sight ?

No traveller, peasant, herdsman ?

*Mar.* Not a soul :  
Here is a tree, ragged, and bent, and bare,  
That turns its goat's-beard flakes of pea-  
green moss

From the stern breathing of the rough sea-  
wind ;

This have we, but no other company :  
Commend me to the place. If a man  
should die

And leave his body here, it were all one  
As he were twenty fathoms underground.

*Her.* Where is our common Friend ?

*Mar.* A ghost, methinks—  
The Spirit of a murdered man, for instance—  
Might have fine room to ramble about here,  
A grand domain to squeak and gibber in.

*Her.* Lost Man ! if thou have any close-  
pent guilt

Pressing upon thy heart, and this the hour  
Of visitation—

*Mar.* A bold word from you !

*Her.* Restore him, Heaven !

*Mar.* The desperate Wretch !—A Flower,  
Fairest of all flowers, was she once, but now  
They have snapped her from the stem—  
Poh ! let her lie

Besoiled with mire, and let the houseless  
snail

Feed on her leaves. You knew her well—  
ay, there,

Old Man ! you were a very Lynx, you knew  
The worm was in her—

*Her.* Mercy ! Sir, what mean you ?

*Mar.* You have a Daughter !

*Her.* Oh that she were here !—  
She hath an eye that sinks into all hearts,  
And if I have in aught offended you,  
Soon would her gentle voice make peace  
between us.

*Mar. (aside).* I do believe he weeps—I  
could weep too—

There is a vein of her voice that runs  
through his :

Even such a Man my fancy bodied forth  
From the first moment that I loved the  
Maid ;

And for his sake I loved her more : these  
tears—

I did not think that aught was left in me  
Of what I have been—yes, I thank thee,  
Heaven !

One happy thought has passed across my  
mind.

—It may not be—I am cut off from man ;  
No more shall I be man—no more shall I  
Have human feelings !—*(To HERBERT.)*—

Now, for a little more  
About your Daughter !

*Her.* Troops of armed men,  
Met in the roads, would bless us; little  
children,  
Rushing along in the full tide of play,  
Stood silent as we passed them! I have  
heard  
The boisterous carman, in the miry road,  
Check his loud whip and hail us with mild  
voice,  
And speak with milder voice to his poor  
beasts.

*Mar.* And whither were you going?

*Her.* Learn, young Man,  
To fear the virtuous, and reverence misery,  
Whether too much for patience, or, like  
mine,  
Softened till it becomes a gift of mercy.

*Mar.* Now, this is as it should be!

*Her.* I am weak!—  
My Daughter does not know how weak  
I am;

And, as thou see'st, under the arch of heaven  
Here do I stand, alone, to helplessness,  
By the good God, our common Father,  
doomed!—

But I had once a spirit and an arm——

*Mar.* Now, for a word about your  
Barony:

I fancy when you left the Holy Land,  
And came to—what's your title—eh? your  
claims  
Were undisputed!

*Her.* Like a mendicant,  
Whom no one comes to meet, I stood  
alone;—

I murmured—but, remembering Him who  
feeds

The pelican and ostrich of the desert,  
From my own threshold I looked up to  
Heaven

And did not want glimmerings of quiet  
hope.

So, from the court I passed, and down the  
brook,

Led by its murmur, to the ancient oak  
I came; and when I felt its cooling shade,  
I sate me down, and cannot but believe—  
While in my lap I held my little Babe  
And clasped her to my heart, my heart that  
ached

More with delight than grief—I heard a  
voice

Such as by Cherith on Elijah called;  
It said, "I will be with thee." A little boy,

A shepherd-lad, ere yet my trance was gone,  
Hailed us as if he had been sent from  
heaven,

And said, with tears, that he would be our  
guide:

I had a better guide—that innocent Babe—  
Her, who hath saved me, to this hour, from  
harm,

From cold, from hunger, penury, and death;  
To whom I owe the best of all the good

I have, or wish for, upon earth—and more  
And higher far than lies within earth's  
bounds:

Therefore I bless her: when I think of Man,  
I bless her with sad spirit,—when of God,  
I bless her in the fulness of my joy!

*Mar.* The name of daughter in his  
mouth, he prays!

With nerves so steady, that the very flies  
Sit unmolested on his staff.—Innocent!—  
If he were innocent—then he would tremble  
And be disturbed, as I am. (*Turning  
aside.*) I have read

In Story, what men now alive have wit-  
nessed,

How, when the People's mind was racked  
with doubt,

Appeal was made to the great Judge: the  
Accused

With naked feet walked over burning  
ploughshares.

Here is a Man by Nature's hand prepared  
For a like trial, but more merciful.

Why else have I been led to this bleak  
Waste?

Bare is it, without house or track, and  
destitute

Of obvious shelter, as a shipless sea.

Here will I leave him—here—All-seeing  
God!

Such as *he* is, and sore perplexed as I am,  
I will commit him to this final *Ordeal*!—

He heard a voice—a shepherd-lad came to  
him

And was his guide; if once, why not again,  
And in this desert? If never—then the  
whole

Of what he says, and looks, and does, and  
is,

Makes up one damning falsehood. Leave  
him here

To cold and hunger!—Pain is of the heart,  
And what are a few throes of bodily suffer-  
ing

If they can waken one pang of remorse ?

[*Goes up to HERBERT.*

Old Man ! my wrath is as a flame burnt out,

It cannot be rekindled. Thou art here  
Led by my hand to save thee from perdition ;  
Thou wilt have time to breathe and think——

*Her.* Oh, Mercy !

*Mar.* I know the need that all men have of mercy,

And therefore leave thee to a righteous judgment.

*Her.* My Child, my blessed Child !

*Mar.* No more of that ;  
Thou wilt have many guides if thou art innocent ;

Yea, from the utmost corners of the earth,  
That Woman will come o'er this Waste to save thee.

[*He pauses and looks at HERBERT'S staff.*

Ha ! what is here ? and carved by her own hand !

[*Reads upon the staff.*

"I am eyes to the blind, saith the Lord.  
He that puts his trust in me shall not fail !"  
Yes, be it so ;—repent and be forgiven—  
God and that staff are now thy only guides.

[*He leaves HERBERT on the Moor.*

SCENE—*An eminence, a Beacon on the summit.*

LACY, WALLACE, LENNOX, etc. etc.

*Several of the Band (confusedly).* But patience !

*One of the Band.* Curses on that Traitor, Oswald !—

Our Captain made a prey to foul device !—

*Len. (to WAL.)* His tool, the wandering Beggar, made last night

A plain confession, such as leaves no doubt,  
Knowing what otherwise we know too well,  
That she revealed the truth. Stand by me now ;

For rather would I have a nest of vipers  
Between my breast-plate and my skin, than make

Oswald my special enemy, if you

Deny me your support.

*Lacy.* We have been fooled—  
But for the motive ?

*Wal.* Natures such as his  
Spin motives out of their own bowels,  
*Lacy !*

I learned this when I was a Confessor.

I know him well ; there needs no other motive

Than that most strange incontinence in crime

Which haunts this Oswald. Power is life to him

And breath and being ; where he cannot govern,

He will destroy.

*Lacy.* To have been trapped like moles !—

Yes, you are right, we need not hunt for motives :

There is no crime from which this man would shrink ;

He recks not human law ; and I have noticed

That often when the name of God is uttered,

A sudden blankness overspreads his face.

*Len.* Yet, reasoner as he is, his pride has built

Some uncouth superstition of its own.

*Wal.* I have seen traces of it.

*Len.* Once he headed

A band of Pirates in the Norway seas ;  
And when the King of Denmark summoned him

To the oath of fealty, I well remember,  
'Twas a strange answer that he made ; he

said,  
"I hold of Spirits, and the Sun in heaven."

*Lacy.* He is no madman.

*Wal.* A most subtle doctor

Were that man, who could draw the line that parts

Pride and her daughter, Cruelty, from Madness,

That should be scourged, not pitied. Restless Minds,

Such Minds as find amid their fellow-men

No heart that loves them, none that they can love,

Will turn perforce and seek for sympathy  
In dim relation to imagined Beings.

*One of the Band.* What if he mean to offer up our Captain

An expiation and a sacrifice  
To those infernal fiends !

*Wal.* Now, if the event  
Should be as Lennox has foretold, then swear,

My Friends, his heart shall have as many wounds

As there are daggers here.

*Lacy.* What need of swearing !

*One of the Band.* Let us away !

*Another.* Away !

*A third.* Hark ! how the horns  
Of those Scotch Rovers echo through the vale.

*Lacy.* Stay you behind ; and when the sun is down,  
Light up this beacon.

*One of the Band.* You shall be obeyed.  
[*They go out together.*]

SCENE—*The Wood on the edge of the Moor.*  
*MARMADUKE (alone).*

*Mar.* Deep, deep and vast, vast beyond human thought,

Yet calm.—I could believe, that there was here

The only quiet heart on earth. In terror,  
Remembered terror, there is peace and rest.

*Enter OSWALD.*

*Osw.* Ha ! my dear Captain.

*Mar.* A later meeting, Oswald,  
Would have been better timed.

*Osw.* Alone, I see ;  
You have done your duty. I had hopes,  
which now

I feel that you will justify.

*Mar.* I had fears,  
From which I have freed myself—but 'tis  
my wish

To be alone, and therefore we must part.

*Osw.* Nay, then—I am mistaken.  
There's a weakness

About you still ; you talk of solitude—

I am your friend.

*Mar.* What need of this assurance  
At any time ? and why given now ?

*Osw.* Because  
You are now in truth my Master ; you have  
taught me

What there is not another living man  
Had strength to teach ;—and therefore  
gratitude

Is bold, and would relieve itself by praise.

*Mar.* Wherefore press this on me ?

*Osw.* Because I feel

That you have shown, and by a signal instance,

How they who would be just must seek the rule

By diving for it into their own bosoms.

To-day you have thrown off a tyranny  
That lives but in the torpid acquiescence  
Of our emasculated souls, the tyranny  
Of the world's masters, with the musty rules  
By which they uphold their craft from age  
to age :

You have obeyed the only law that sense  
Submits to recognise ; the immediate law,  
From the clear light of circumstances, flashed  
Upon an independent Intellect.

Henceforth new prospects open on your path ;

Your faculties should grow with the demand ;  
I still will be your friend, will cleave to you  
Through good and evil, obloquy and scorn,  
Oft as they dare to follow on your steps.

*Mar.* I would be left alone.

*Osw. (exultingly).* I know your motives !  
I am not of the world's presumptuous judges,  
Who damn where they can neither see nor feel,

With a hard-hearted ignorance ; your struggles

I witnessed, and now hail your victory.

*Mar.* Spare me awhile that greeting.

*Osw.* It may be,

That some there are, squeamish half-think-  
ing cowards,

Who will turn pale upon you, call you  
murderer,

And you will walk in solitude among them.

A mighty evil for a strong-built mind !—

Join twenty tapers of unequal height

And light them joined, and you will see the  
less

How 'twill burn down the taller ; and they  
all

Shall prey upon the tallest. Solitude !—

The Eagle lives in Solitude.

*Mar.* Even so,  
The Sparrow so on the housetop, and I,  
The weakest of God's creatures, stand  
resolved

To abide the issue of my act, alone.

*Osw.* Now would you ? and for ever ?—

My young Friend,

As time advances either we become  
The prey or masters of our own past deeds.  
Fellowship we *must* have, willing or no ;



And if good Angels fail, slack in their duty,

Substitutes, turn our faces where we may,  
Are still forthcoming ; some which, though they bear

Ill names, can render no ill services,  
In recompense for what themselves required.  
So meet extremes in this mysterious world,  
And opposites thus melt into each other.

*Mar.* Time, since Man first drew breath,  
has never moved

With such a weight upon his wings as now ;  
But they will soon be lightened.

*Osw.* Ay, look up—  
Cast round you your mind's eye, and you will learn

Fortitude is the child of Enterprise :  
Great actions move our admiration, chiefly  
Because they carry in themselves an earnest  
That we can suffer greatly.

*Mar.* Very true.

*Osw.* Action is transitory—a step, a blow,

The motion of a muscle—this way or that—  
'Tis done, and in the after-vacancy  
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed :  
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,  
And shares the nature of infinity.

*Mar.* Truth—and I feel it.

*Osw.* What ! if you had bid  
Eternal farewell to unmingled joy  
And the light dancing of the thoughtless heart ;

It is the toy of fools, and little fit  
For such a world as this. The wise abjure  
All thoughts whose idle composition lives  
In the entire forgetfulness of pain.  
—I see I have disturbed you.

*Mar.* By no means.

*Osw.* Compassion !—pity !—pride can  
do without them ;  
And what if you should never know them  
more !—

He is a puny soul who, feeling pain,  
Finds ease because another feels it too.  
If e'er I open out this heart of mine  
It shall be for a nobler end—to teach  
And not to purchase puling sympathy.  
—Nay, you are pale.

*Mar.* It may be so.

*Osw.* Remorse—  
It cannot live with thought ; think on,  
think on,

And it will die. What ! in this universe,

Where the least things control the greatest,  
where

The faintest breath that breathes can move  
a world ;

What ! feel remorse, where, if a cat had  
sneezed,

A leaf had fallen, the thing had never been  
Whose very shadow gnaws us to the vitals.

*Mar.* Now, whither are you wandering ?  
That a man

So used to suit his language to the time,  
Should thus so widely differ from himself—  
It is most strange.

*Osw.* Murder !—what's in the word !—  
I have no cases by me ready made

To fit all deeds. Carry him to the Camp !—  
A shallow project ;—you of late have seen

More deeply, taught us that the institutes  
Of Nature, by a cunning usurpation

Banished from human intercourse, exist  
Only in our relations to the brutes

That make the fields their dwelling. If a  
snake

Crawl from beneath our feet we do not ask  
A license to destroy him : our good governors

Hedge in the life of every pest and plague  
That bears the shape of man ; and for what

purpose,  
But to protect themselves from extirpa-  
tion ?—

This flimsy barrier you have overleaped.

*Mar.* My Office is fulfilled—the Man is  
now

Delivered to the Judge of all things.

*Osw.* Dead !

*Mar.* I have borne my burthen to its  
destined end.

*Osw.* This instant we'll return to our  
companions—

Oh how I long to see their faces again !

*Enter IDONEA, with Pilgrims who continue  
their journey.*

*Idon.* (after some time). What, Mar-  
maduke ! now thou art mine for ever.

And Oswald, too ! (To MARMADUKE).  
On will we to my Father

With the glad tidings which this day hath  
brought ;

We'll go together, and, such proof received  
Of his own rights restored, his gratitude

To God above will make him feel for ours.  
*Osw.* I interrupt you ?

*Idon.* Think not so.

*Mar.* Idonea,  
That I should ever live to see this moment !  
*Idon.* Forgive me.—Oswald knows it all  
—he knows,

Each word of that unhappy letter fell  
As a blood drop from my heart.

*Osw.* 'Twas even so.

*Mar.* I have much to say, but for whose  
ear?—not thine.

*Idon.* Ill can I bear that look—Plead for  
me, Oswald !

You are my Father's Friend.

(*To MARMADUKE*). Alas, you know not,  
And never *can* you know, how much he  
loved me.

Twice had he been to me a father, twice  
Had given me breath, and was I not to be  
His daughter, once his daughter? could I  
withstand

His pleading face, and feel his clasping  
arms,

And hear his prayer that I would not for-  
sake him

In his old age— [*Hides her face.*]

*Mar.* Patience—Heaven grant me  
patience !—

She weeps, she weeps—my brain shall burn  
for hours

Ere I can shed a tear.

*Idon.* I was a woman ;  
And, balancing the hopes that are the  
dearest

To womankind with duty to my Father,  
I yielded up those precious hopes, which  
nought

On earth could else have wrested from me ;  
—if erring.

Oh let me be forgiven !

*Mar.* I do forgive thee.

*Idon.* But take me to your arms—this  
breast, alas !

It throbs, and you have a heart that does  
not feel it.

*Mar.* (*exultingly*). She is innocent.

[*He embraces her.*]

*Osw.* (*aside*). Were I a Moralist,  
I should make wondrous revolution here ;  
It were a quaint experiment to show

The beauty of truth— [*Addressing them.*]

I see I interrupt you ;

I shall have business with you, Marmaduke ;

Follow me to the Hostel. [*Exit OSWALD.*]

*Idon.* Marmaduke,

This is a happy day. My Father soon

Shall sun himself before his native doors ;  
The lame, the hungry, will be welcome there.  
No more shall he complain of wasted  
strength,

Of thoughts that fail, and a decaying heart ;  
His good works will be balm and life to him.

*Mar.* This is most strange !—I know  
not what it was,

But there was something which most plainly  
said,

That thou wert innocent.

*Idon.* How innocent !—

Oh heavens ! you've been deceived.

*Mar.* Thou art a Woman,  
To bring perdition on the universe.

*Idon.* Already I've been punished to the  
height

Of my offence. [*Smiling affectionately.*]

I see you love me still,

The labours of my hand are still your joy ;  
Bethink you of the hour when on your  
shoulder

I hung this belt.

[*Pointing to the belt on which was sus-  
pended HERBERT'S scrip.*]

*Mar.* Mercy of Heaven ! [*Sinks.*]

*Idon.* What ails you ! [*Distractedly.*]

*Mar.* The scrip that held his food, and  
I forgot

To give it back again !

*Idon.* What mean your words ?

*Mar.* I know not what I said—all may  
be well.

*Idon.* That smile hath life in it !

*Mar.* This road is perilous ;

I will attend you to a Hut that stands  
Near the wood's edge—rest there to-night,

I pray you :

For me, I have business, as you heard,  
with Oswald,

But will return to you by break of day.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### ACT IV.

SCENE—*A desolate prospect—a ridge of  
rocks—a Chapel on the summit of one—  
Moon behind the rocks—night stormy—  
irregular sound of a Bell—HERBERT  
enters exhausted.*

*Her.* That Chapel-bell in mercy seemed  
to guide me,

But now it mocks my steps ; its fitful stroke

Can scarcely be the work of human hands.  
Hear me, ye Men, upon the cliffs, if such  
There be who pray nightly before the Altar.  
Oh that I had but strength to reach the  
place !

My Child—my child—dark—dark—I faint  
—this wind—

These stifling blasts—God help me !

*Enter ELDRED.*

*Eld.* Better this bare rock,  
Though it were tottering over a man's  
head,  
Than a tight case of dungeon walls for  
shelter  
From such rough dealing.

*[A moaning voice is heard.*

Ha ! what sound is that ?  
Trees creaking in the wind (but none are  
here)  
Send forth such noises—and that weary  
bell !

Surely some evil Spirit abroad to-night  
Is ringing it—'twould stop a Saint in  
prayer,  
And that—what is it ? never was sound so  
like

A human groan. Ha ! what is here ?  
Poor Man—

Murdered ! alas ! speak—speak, I am your  
friend :

No answer—hush—lost wretch, he lifts his  
hand

And lays it to his heart—(*Kneels to him*).  
I pray you speak !

What has befallen you ?

*Her. (feebly).* A stranger has done this,  
And in the arms of a stranger I must die.

*Eld.* Nay, think not so : come, let me  
raise you up : *[Raises him.*

This is a dismal place—well—that is well—  
I was too fearful—take me for your guide  
And your support—my hut is not far off.

*[Draws him gently off the stage.*

SCENE—*A room in the Hostel*—MARMA-  
DUKE and OSWALD.

*Mar.* But for Idonea !—I have cause to  
think  
That she is innocent.

*Osw.* Leave that thought awhile,  
As one of those beliefs, which in their hearts  
Lovers lock up as pearls, though oft no  
better

Than feathers clinging to their points of  
passion.

This day's event has laid on me the duty  
Of opening out my story ; you must hear it,  
And without further preface.—In my youth,  
Except for that abatement which is paid  
By envy as a tribute to desert,  
I was the pleasure of all hearts, the darling  
Of every tongue—as you are now. You've  
heard

That I embarked for Syria. On our voyage  
Was hatched among the crew a foul Con-  
spiracy

Against my honour, in the which our Captain  
Was, I believed, prime Agent. The wind  
fell ;

We lay becalmed week after week, until  
The water of the vessel was exhausted ;  
I felt a double fever in my veins,  
Yet rage suppressed itself ;—to a deep still-  
ness

Did my pride tame my pride ;—for many  
days,

On a dead sea under a burning sky,  
I brooded o'er my injuries, deserted  
By man and nature ;—if a breeze had blown,  
It might have found its way into my heart,  
And I had been—no matter—do you mark  
me ?

*Mar.* Quick—to the point—if any untold  
crime

Doth haunt your memory.

*Osw.* Patience, hear me further !—  
One day in silence did we drift at noon  
By a bare rock, narrow, and white, and  
bare ;

No food was there, no drink, no grass, no  
shade,

No tree, nor jutting eminence, nor form  
Inanimate large as the body of man,  
Nor any living thing whose lot of life  
Might stretch beyond the measure of one  
moon.

To dig for water on the spot, the Captain  
Landed with a small troop, myself being  
one :

There I reproached him with his treachery.  
Imperious at all times, his temper rose ;  
He struck me ; and that instant had I killed  
him,

And put an end to his insolence, but my  
Comrades  
Rushed in between us : then did I insist  
(All hated him, and I was stung to madness)

That we should leave him there, alive!—  
we did so.

*Mar.* And he was famished?

*Osw.* Naked was the spot;  
Methinks I see it now—how in the sun  
Its stony surface glittered like a shield;  
And in that miserable place we left him,  
Alone but for a swarm of minute creatures  
Not one of which could help him while alive,  
Or mourn him dead.

*Mar.* A man by men cast off,  
Left without burial! nay, not dead nor  
dying,  
But standing, walking, stretching forth his  
arms,  
In all things like ourselves, but in the agony  
With which he called for mercy; and—even  
so—

He was forsaken?

*Osw.* There is a power in sounds:  
The cries he uttered might have stopped the  
boat

That bore us through the water——

*Mar.* You returned  
Upon that dismal hearing—did you not?

*Osw.* Some scoffed at him with hellish  
mockery,  
And laughed so loud it seemed that the  
smooth sea

Did from some distant region echo us.

*Mar.* We all are of one blood, our veins  
are filled

At the same poisonous fountain!

*Osw.* 'Twas an island  
Only by sufferance of the winds and waves,  
Which with their foam could cover it at will.  
I know not how he perished; but the calm,  
The same dead calm, continued many days.

*Mar.* But his own crime had brought on  
him this doom,  
His wickedness prepared it; these ex-  
pedients

Are terrible, yet ours is not the fault.

*Osw.* The man was famished, and was  
innocent!

*Mar.* Impossible!

*Osw.* The man had never wronged me.

*Mar.* Banish the thought, crush it, and  
be at peace.

His guilt was marked—these things could  
never be

Were there not eyes that see, and for good  
ends,

Where ours are baffled.

*Osw.* I had been deceived.

*Mar.* And from that hour the miserable  
man

No more was heard of?

*Osw.* I had been betrayed.

*Mar.* And he found no deliverance!

*Osw.* The Crew  
Gave me a hearty welcome; they had laid  
The plot to rid themselves, at any cost,  
Of a tyrannic Master whom they loathed.  
So we pursued our voyage: when we landed,  
The tale was spread abroad; my power at  
once

Shrunk from me; plans and schemes, and  
lofty hopes—

All vanished. I gave way—do you attend?

*Mar.* The Crew deceived you?

*Osw.* Nay, command yourself.

*Mar.* It is a dismal night—how the wind  
howls!

*Osw.* I hid my head within a Convent,  
there

Lay passive as a dormouse in mid-winter.

That was no life for me—I was o'erthrown,  
But not destroyed.

*Mar.* The proofs—you ought to have seen  
The guilt—have touched it—felt it at your  
heart—

As I have done.

*Osw.* A fresh tide of Crusaders  
Drove by the place of my retreat: three  
nights

Did constant meditation dry my blood;  
Three sleepless nights I passed in sounding  
on,

Through words and things, a dim and  
perilous way;

And, wheresoe'er I turned me, I beheld  
A slavery compared to which the dungeon  
And clanking chains are perfect liberty.  
You understand me—I was comforted;  
I saw that every possible shape of action  
Might lead to good—I saw it and burst  
forth

Thirsting for some of those exploits that  
fill

The earth for sure redemption of lost peace.

[Marking MARMADUKE'S countenance.

Nay, you have had the worst. Ferocity  
Subsided in a moment, like a wind  
That drops down dead out of a sky it  
vexed.

And yet I had within me evermore  
A salient spring of energy; I mounted

From action up to action with a mind  
That never rested—without meat or drink  
Have I lived many days—my sleep was bound

To purposes of reason—not a dream  
But had a continuity and substance  
That waking life had never power to give.

*Mar.* O wretched Human-kind !—Until  
the mystery

Of all this world is solved, well may we  
envy

The worm, that, underneath a stone whose  
weight

Would crush the lion's paw with mortal  
anguish,

Doth lodge, and feed, and coil, and sleep,  
in safety.

Fell not the wrath of Heaven upon those  
traitors ?

*Osw.* Give not to them a thought. From  
Palestine

We marched to Syria : oft I left the Camp,  
When all that multitude of hearts was  
still,

And followed on, through woods of gloomy  
cedar,

Into deep chasms troubled by roaring  
streams ;

Or from the top of Lebanon surveyed  
The moonlight desert, and the moonlight  
sea :

In these my lonely wanderings I perceived  
What mighty objects do impress their  
forms

To elevate our intellectual being ;  
And felt, if aught on earth deserves a curse,  
'Tis that worst principle of ill which dooms  
A thing so great to perish self-consumed.  
—So much for my remorse !

*Mar.* Unhappy Man !

*Osw.* When from these forms I turned  
to contemplate

The World's opinions and her usages,  
I seemed a Being who had passed alone  
Into a region of futurity,  
Whose natural element was freedom——

*Mar.* Stop—

I may not, cannot, follow thee.

*Osw.* You must.

I had been nourished by the sickly food  
Of popular applause. I now perceived  
That we are praised, only as men in us  
Do recognise some image of themselves,  
An abject counterpart of what they are,

Or the empty thing that they would wish  
to be.

I felt that merit has no surer test  
Than obloquy ; that, if we wish to serve  
The world in substance, not deceive by  
show,

We must become obnoxious to its hate,  
Or fear disguised in simulated scorn.

*Mar.* I pity, can forgive, you ; but those  
wretches—

That monstrous perfidy !

*Osw.* Keep down your wrath.

False Shame discarded, spurious Fame de-  
spised,

Twin sisters both of Ignorance, I found  
Life stretched before me smooth as some  
broad way

Cleared for a monarch's progress. Priests  
might spin

Their veil, but not for me—'twas in fit  
place

Among its kindred cobwebs. I had been,  
And in that dream had left my native land,  
One of Love's simple bondsmen—the soft  
chain

Was off for ever ; and the men, from whom  
This liberation came, you would destroy :  
Join me in thanks for their blind services.

*Mar.* 'Tis a strange aching that, when  
we would curse

And cannot.—You have betrayed me—I  
have done—

I am content—I know that he is guiltless—  
That both are guiltless, without spot or  
stain,

Mutually consecrated. Poor old Man !  
And I had heart for this, because thou  
lovedst

Her who from very infancy had been  
Light to thy path, warmth to thy blood !—  
Together [Turning to OSWALD.

We propped his steps, he leaned upon us  
both.

*Osw.* Ay, we are coupled by a chain of  
adamant ;

Let us be fellow-labourers, then, to enlarge  
Man's intellectual empire. We subsist  
In slavery ; all is slavery ; we receive  
Laws, but we ask not whence those laws  
have come ;

We need an inward sting to goad us on.

*Mar.* Have you betrayed me ? Speak to  
that.

*Osw.* The mask,

Which for a season I have stooped to wear,  
Must be cast off.—Know then that I was  
urged,

(For other impulse let it pass) was driven,  
To seek for sympathy, because I saw  
In you a mirror of my youthful self ;  
I would have made us equal once again,  
But that was a vain hope. You have  
struck home,

With a few drops of blood cut short the  
business ;

Therein for ever you must yield to me.

But what is done will save you from the  
blank

Of living without knowledge that you live :  
Now you are suffering—for the future day,  
'Tis his who will command it.—Think of  
my story—

Herbert is *innocent*.

*Mar.* (in a faint voice, and doubtingly).  
You do but echo

My own wild words ?

*Osw.* Young Man, the seed must lie  
Hid in the earth, or there can be no harvest ;  
'Tis Nature's law. What I have done in  
darkness

I will avow before the face of day.

Herbert is *innocent*.

*Mar.* What fiend could prompt  
This action ? Innocent !—oh, breaking  
heart !—

Alive or dead, I'll find him. [*Exit.*

*Osw.* Alive—perdition ! [*Exit.*

SCENE—*The inside of a poor Cottage.*

ELEANOR and IDONEA seated.

*Idon.* The storm beats hard—Mercy for  
poor or rich,

Whose heads are shelterless in such a night !

*A Voice without.* Holla ! to bed, good  
Folks, within !

*Elea.* O save us !

*Idon.* What can this mean ?

*Elea.* Alas, for my poor husband !—  
We'll have a counting of our flocks to-  
morrow ;

The wolf keeps festival these stormy nights :  
Be calm, sweet Lady, they are wassailers

[*The voices die away in the distance.*

Returning from their Feast—my heart beats  
so—

A noise at midnight does so frighten me.

*Idon.* Hush ! [*Listening.*

*Elea.* They are gone. On such a night  
my husband,

Dragged from his bed, was cast into a  
dungeon,

Where, hid from me, he counted many  
years,

A criminal in no one's eyes but theirs—  
Not even in theirs—whose brutal violence  
So dealt with him.

*Idon.* I have a noble Friend  
First among youths of knightly breeding,  
One

Who lives but to protect the weak or  
injured.

There again ! [*Listening.*

*Elea.* 'Tis my husband's foot. Good  
Eldred

Has a kind heart ; but his imprisonment  
Has made him fearful, and he'll never be  
The man he was.

*Idon.* I will retire ;—good night !  
[*She goes within.*

*Enter ELDRED (hides a bundle).*

*Eld.* Not yet in bed, Eleanor !—there  
are stains in that frock which must be  
washed out.

*Elea.* What has befallen you ?

*Eld.* I am belated, and you must know  
the cause—(*speaking low*) that is the blood  
of an unhappy Man.

*Elea.* Oh ! we are undone for ever.

*Eld.* Heaven forbid that I should lift my  
hand against any man. Eleanor, I have  
shed tears to-night, and it comforts me to  
think of it.

*Elea.* Where, where is he ?

*Eld.* I have done him no harm, but—  
it will be forgiven me ; it would not have  
been so once.

*Elea.* You have not *buried* anything ?  
You are no richer than when you left me ?

*Eld.* Be at peace ; I am innocent.

*Elea.* Then God be thanked—

[*A short pause ; she falls  
upon his neck.*

*Eld.* To-night I met with an old Man  
lying stretched upon the ground—a sad  
spectacle : I raised him up with a hope  
that we might shelter and restore him.

*Elea.* (*as if ready to run.*) Where is he ?  
You were not able to bring him *all* the way  
with you ; let us return, I can help you.

[*ELDRED shakes his head.*

*Eld.* He did not seem to wish for life : as I was struggling on, by the light of the moon I saw the stains of blood upon my clothes—he waved his hand, as if it were all useless ; and I let him sink again to the ground.

*Elea.* Oh that I had been by your side !

*Eld.* I tell you his hands and his body were cold—how could I disturb his last moments ? he strove to turn from me as if he wished to settle into sleep.

*Elea.* But, for the stains of blood—

*Eld.* He must have fallen, I fancy, for his head was cut ; but I think his malady was cold and hunger.

*Elea.* Oh, Eldred, I shall never be able to look up at this roof in storm or fair but I shall tremble.

*Eld.* Is it not enough that my ill stars have kept me abroad to-night till this hour ? I come home, and this is my comfort !

*Elea.* But did he say nothing which might have set you at ease ?

*Eld.* I thought he grasped my hand while he was muttering something about his Child—his Daughter—*(starting as if he heard a noise)*. What is that ?

*Elea.* Eldred, you are a father.

*Eld.* God knows what was in my heart, and will not curse my son for my sake.

*Elea.* But you prayed by him ? you waited the hour of his release ?

*Eld.* The night was wasting fast ; I have no friend ; I am spited by the world—his wound terrified me—if I had brought him along with me, and he had died in my arms !—I am sure I heard something breathing—and this chair !

*Elea.* Oh, Eldred, you will die alone. You will have nobody to close your eyes—no hand to grasp your dying hand—I shall be in my grave. A curse will attend us all.

*Eld.* Have you forgot your own troubles when I was in the dungeon ?

*Elea.* And you left him alive ?

*Eld.* Alive !—the damps of death were upon him—he could not have survived an hour.

*Elea.* In the cold, cold night.

*Eld. (in a savage tone)*. Ay, and his head was bare ; I suppose you would have had me lend my bonnet to cover it.—You will

never rest till I am brought to a felon's end.

*Elea.* Is there nothing to be done ? cannot we go to the Convent ?

*Eld.* Ay, and say at once that I murdered him !

*Elea.* Eldred, I know that ours is the only house upon the Waste ; let us take heart ; this Man may be rich ; and could he be saved by our means, his gratitude may reward us.

*Eld.* 'Tis all in vain.

*Elea.* But let us make the attempt. This old Man may have a wife, and he may have children—let us return to the spot ; we may restore him, and his eyes may yet open upon those that love him.

*Eld.* He will never open them more ; even when he spoke to me, he kept them firmly sealed as if he had been blind.

*Idon. (rushing out)*. It is, it is, my Father—

*Eld.* We are betrayed *(looking at IDONEA)*.

*Elea.* His Daughter !—God have mercy ! *(turning to IDONEA)*.

*Idon. (sinking down)*. Oh ! lift me up and carry me to the place.

You are safe ; the whole world shall not harm you.

*Elea.* This Lady is his Daughter.

*Eld. (moved)*. I'll lead you to the spot.

*Idon. (springing up)*. Alive !—you heard him breathe ? quick, quick—

*[Exeunt.]*

## ACT V.

SCENE—*A wood on the edge of the Waste.*

*Enter OSWALD and a Forester.*

*For.* He leaned upon the bridge that spans the glen,  
And down into the bottom cast his eye,  
That fastened there, as it would check the current.

*Osw.* He listened too ; did you not say he listened ?

*For.* As if there came such moaning from the flood  
As is heard often after stormy nights.

*Osw.* But did he utter nothing ?

*For.* See him there !

MARMADUKE *appearing*.

*Mar.* Buzz, buzz, ye black and winged freebooters ;

That is no substance which ye settle on !

*For.* His senses play him false ; and see, his arms

Outspread, as if to save himself from falling !—

Some terrible phantom I believe is now Passing before him, such as God will not Permit to visit any but a man

Who has been guilty of some horrid crime.

[MARMADUKE *disappears*.

*Osw.* The game is up !—

*For.* If it be needful, Sir, I will assist you to lay hands upon him.

*Osw.* No, no, my Friend, you may pursue your business—

'Tis a poor wretch of an unsettled mind, Who has a trick of straying from his keepers ;

We must be gentle. Leave him to my care. [Exit Forester.

If his own eyes play false with him, these freaks

Of fancy shall be quickly tamed by mine ; The goal is reached. My Master shall become

A shadow of myself—made by myself.

SCENE—*The edge of the Moor.*

MARMADUKE and ELDRED *enter from opposite sides.*

*Mar.* (raising his eyes and perceiving ELDRED). In any corner of this savage Waste,

Have you, good Peasant, seen a blind old Man ?

*Eld.* I heard—

*Mar.* You heard him, where? when heard him?

*Eld.* As you know, The first hours of last night were rough with storm :

I had been out in search of a stray heifer ; Returning late, I heard a moaning sound ; Then, thinking that my fancy had deceived me,

I hurried on, when straight a second moan, A human voice distinct, struck on my ear, So guided, distant a few steps, I found An aged Man, and such as you describe.

*Mar.* You heard !—he called you to him? Of all men

The best and kindest !—but where is he? guide me,

That I may see him.

*Eld.* On a ridge of rocks A lonesome Chapel stands, deserted now : The bell is left, which no one dares remove ; And, when the stormy wind blows o'er the peak,

It rings, as if a human hand were there To pull the cord. I guess he must have heard it ;

And it had led him towards the precipice, To climb up to the spot whence the sound came ;

But he had failed through weakness. From his hand

His staff had dropped, and close upon the brink

Of a small pool of water he was laid, As if he had stooped to drink, and so remained

Without the strength to rise.

*Mar.* Well, well, he lives, And all is safe : what said he?

*Eld.* But few words : He only spake to me of a dear Daughter, Who, so he feared, would never see him more ;

And of a Stranger to him, One by whom He had been sore misused ; but he forgave The wrong and the wrong-doer. You are troubled—

Perhaps you are his son?

*Mar.* The All-seeing knows, I did not think he had a living Child.— But whither did you carry him?

*Eld.* He was torn, His head was bruised, and there was blood about him—

*Mar.* That was no work of mine.

*Eld.* Nor was it mine.

*Mar.* But had he strength to walk? I could have borne him

A thousand miles.

*Eld.* I am in poverty, And know how busy are the tongues of men ; My heart was willing, Sir, but I am one Whose good deeds will not stand by their own light ;

And, though it smote me more than words can tell,

I left him.



*Mar.* I believe that there are phantoms,  
That in the shape of man do cross our path  
On evil instigation, to make sport  
Of our distress—and thou art one of them!  
But things substantial have so pressed on  
me—

*Eld.* My wife and children came into  
my mind.

*Mar.* Oh Monster! Monster! there are  
three of us,  
And we shall howl together.

[*After a pause and in a feeble voice.*

I am deserted  
At my worst need, my crimes have in a net  
(*Pointing to ELDRÉD*) Entangled this poor  
man.—Where was it? where?

[*Dragging him along.*

*Eld.* 'Tis needless; spare your violence.  
His Daughter—

*Mar.* Ay, in the word a thousand scor-  
pions lodge

This old man *had* a Daughter.

*Eld.* To the spot  
I hurried back with her.—O save me, Sir,  
From such a journey!—there was a black  
tree,

A single tree; she thought it was her  
Father.—

Oh Sir, I would not see that hour again  
For twenty lives. The daylight dawned,  
and now—

Nay; hear my tale, 'tis fit that you should  
hear it—

As we approached, a solitary crow  
Rose from the spot;—the Daughter clapped  
her hands,

And then I heard a shriek so terrible

[*MARMADUKE shrinks back.*

The startled bird quivered upon the wing.

*Mar.* Dead, dead!—

*Eld.* (*after a pause*). A dismal matter,  
Sir, for me,

And seems the like for you; if 'tis your  
wish,

I'll lead you to his Daughter; but 'twere  
best

That she should be prepared; I'll go before.

*Mar.* There will be need of preparation.

[*ELDRÉD goes off.*

*Elea.* (*enters*). Master!  
Your limbs sink under you, shall I support  
you?

*Mar.* (*taking her arm*). Woman, I've  
lent my body to the service

Which now thou tak'st upon thee. God  
forbid

That thou shouldst ever meet a like occasion  
With such a purpose in thine heart as mine  
was.

*Elea.* Oh, why have I to do with things  
like these? [*Exeunt.*

SCENE changes to the door of ELDRÉD'S  
cottage—IDONEA seated—enter ELDRÉD.

*Eld.* Your Father, Lady, from a wilful  
hand

Has met unkindness; so indeed he told  
me,

And you remember such was my report:  
From what has just befallen me I have  
cause

To fear the very worst.

*Idon.* My Father is dead;  
Why dost thou come to me with words like  
these?

*Eld.* A wicked Man should answer for  
his crimes.

*Idon.* Thou seest me what I am.

*Eld.* It was most heinous,  
And doth call out for vengeance.

*Idon.* Do not add,  
I priethee, to the harm thou'st done already.

*Eld.* Hereafter you will thank me for  
this service.

Hard by a Man I met, who, from plain  
proofs

Of interfering Heaven, I have no doubt,  
Laid hands upon your Father. Fit it were  
You should prepare to meet him.

*Idon.* I have nothing  
To do with others; help me to my Father—

[*She turns and sees MARMADUKE leaning  
on ELEANOR—throws herself upon his  
neck, and after some time,*

In joy I met thee, but a few hours past;  
And thus we meet again; one human stay  
Is left me still in thee. Nay, shake not so.

*Mar.* In such a wilderness—to see no  
thing,

No, not the pitying moon!

*Idon.* And perish so.

*Mar.* Without a dog to moan for him.

*Idon.* Think not of it,  
But enter there and see him how he sleeps,  
Tranquil as he had died in his own bed.

*Mar.* 'Tranquil—why not?

*Idon.* Oh, peace!

*Mar.* He is at peace ;  
His body is at rest : there was a plot,  
A hideous plot, against the soul of man :  
It took effect—and yet I baffled it,  
In some degree.

*Idon.* Between us stood, I thought,  
A cup of consolation, filled from Heaven  
For both our needs ; must I, and in thy  
presence,  
Alone partake of it ?—Belovèd Marmaduke !

*Mar.* Give me a reason why the wisest  
thing  
That the earth owns shall never choose to  
die,  
But some one must be near to count his  
groans.

The wounded deer retires to solitude,  
And dies in solitude : all things but man,  
All die in solitude.

[*Moving towards the cottage door.*

Mysterious God,

If she had never lived I had not done it !—

*Idon.* Alas, the thought of such a cruel  
death

Has overwhelmed him.—I must follow.

*Eld.* Lady !  
You will do well ; (*she goes*) unjust suspicion  
may

Cleave to this Stranger : if, upon his  
entering,

The dead Man heave a groan, or from his  
side

Uplift his hand—that would be evidence.

*Elea.* Shame ! Eldred, shame !

*Mar.* (*both returning*). The dead have  
but one face (*to himself*).

And such a Man—so meek and unoffend-  
ing—

Helpless and harmless as a babe : a Man,  
By obvious signal to the world's protection,  
Solemnly dedicated—to decoy him !—

*Idon.* Oh, had you seen him living !—

*Mar.* I (*so filled*  
With horror is this world) am unto thee  
The thing most precious, that it now  
contains :

Therefore through me alone must be revealed  
By whom thy Parent was destroyed, Idonea !  
I have the proofs !—

*Idon.* O miserable Father !  
Thou didst command me to bless all man-  
kind ;

Nor to this moment, have I ever wished  
Evil to any living thing ; but hear me,

Hear me, ye Heavens !—(*kneeling*)—may  
vengeance haunt the fiend

For this most cruel murder : let him live  
And move in terror of the elements ;  
The thunder send him on his knees to prayer  
In the open streets, and let him think he  
sees,

If e'er he entereth the house of God,  
The roof, self-moved, unsettling o'er his  
head ;

And let him, when he would lie down at  
night,

Point to his wife the blood-drops on his  
pillow !

*Mar.* My voice was silent, but my heart  
hath joined thee.

*Idon.* (*leaning on MARMADUKE*). Left  
to the mercy of that savage Man !

How could he call upon his Child !—O  
Friend ! [*Turns to MARMADUKE*.  
My faithful true and only Comforter.

*Mar.* Ay, come to me and weep. (*He*  
*kisses her.*) (*To ELDRED.*) Yes,  
Varlet, look,

The devils at such sights do clap their hands.

[*ELDRED retires alarmed.*

*Idon.* Thy vest is torn, thy cheek is  
deadly pale ;

Hast thou pursued the monster ?

*Mar.* I have found him.—  
Oh ! would that thou hadst perished in the  
flames !

*Idon.* Here art thou, then can I be  
desolate ?—

*Mar.* There was a time, when this pro-  
tecting hand

Availed against the mighty ; never more  
Shall blessings wait upon a deed of mine.

*Idon.* Wild words for me to hear, for me,  
an orphan

Committed to thy guardianship by Heaven ;  
And, if thou hast forgiven me, let me hope,  
In this deep sorrow, trust, that I am thine  
For closer care ;—here, is no malady.

[*Taking his arm.*

*Mar.* There, is a malady—  
(*Striking his heart and forehead*). And  
here, and here,

A mortal malady.—I am accursed :  
All nature curses me, and in my heart  
Thy curse is fixed ; the truth must be laid  
bare.

It must be told, and borne. I am the man,  
(Abused, betrayed, but how it matters not)

Presumptuous above all that ever breathed,  
Who, casting as I thought a guilty Person  
Upon Heaven's righteous judgment, did  
become

An instrument of Fiends. Through me,  
through me

Thy Father perished.

*Idon.* Perished—by what mischance?

*Mar.* Belovèd!—if I dared, so would I  
call thee—

Conflict must cease, and, in thy frozen  
heart,

The extremes of suffering meet in absolute  
peace. [*He gives her a letter.*

*Idon.* (*reads*). "Be not surprised if you  
hear that some signal judgment has befallen  
the man who calls himself your father; he  
is now with me, as his signature will shew:  
abstain from conjecture till you see me.

"HERBERT.

"MARMADUKE."

The writing Oswald's; the signature my  
Father's:

(*Looks steadily at the paper*). And here is  
yours,—or do my eyes deceive me?

You have then seen my Father?

*Mar.* He has leaned  
Upon this arm.

*Idon.* You led him towards the Con-  
vent?

*Mar.* That Convent was Stone-Arthur  
Castle. Thither

We were his guides. I on that night re-  
solved

That he should wait thy coming till the day  
Of resurrection.

*Idon.* Miserable Woman,  
Too quickly moved, too easily giving way,  
I put denial on thy suit, and hence,  
With the disastrous issue of last night,  
Thy perturbation, and these frantic words.  
Be calm, I pray thee!

*Mar.* Oswald——  
*Idon.* Name him not.

*Enter female Beggar.*

*Beg.* And he is dead!—that Moor—how  
shall I cross it?

By night, by day, never shall I be able  
To travel half a mile alone.—Good Lady!  
Forgive me!—Saints forgive me. Had I  
thought

It would have come to this!—

*Idon.* What brings you hither? speak!

*Beg.* (*pointing to MARMADUKE*). This in-  
nocent Gentleman. Sweet heavens!  
I told him

Such tales of your dead Father!—God is  
my judge,

I thought there was no harm: but that bad  
Man,

He bribed me with his gold, and looked so  
fierce.

Mercy! I said I know not what—oh pity  
me—

I said, sweet Lady, you were not his  
Daughter—

Pity me, I am haunted;—thrice this day  
My conscience made me wish to be struck  
blind;

And then I would have prayed, and had no  
voice.

*Idon.* (*to MARMADUKE*). Was it my  
Father?—no, no, no, for he

Was meek and patient, feeble, old and  
blind,

Helpless, and loved me dearer than his life.  
—But hear me. For one question, I have  
a heart

That will sustain me. Did you murder him?

*Mar.* No, not by stroke of arm. But  
learn the process:

Proof after proof was pressed upon me;  
guilt

Made evident, as seemed, by blacker guilt,  
Whose impious folds enwrapped even thee;  
and truth

And innocence, embodied in his looks,  
His words and tones and gestures, did but  
serve

With me to aggravate his crimes, and  
heaped

Ruin upon the cause for which they pleaded.  
Then pity crossed the path of my resolve:  
Confounded, I looked up to Heaven, and  
cast,

Idonea! thy blind Father, on the Ordeal  
Of the bleak Waste—left him—and so he  
died!—

[IDONEA sinks senseless; Beggar,  
ELEANOR, etc., crowd round, and bear  
her off.

Why may we speak these things, and do no  
more;

Why should a thrust of the arm have such  
a power,

And words that tell these things be heard  
in vain?

She is not dead. Why!—if I loved this Woman,

I would take care she never woke again ;  
But she WILL wake, and she will weep for me,

And say, no blame was mine—and so, poor fool,

Will waste her curses on another name.

[*He walks about distractedly.*]

Enter OSWALD.

Osw. (*to himself*). Strong to o'ertake,  
strong also to build up.

[*To MARMADUKE.*]

The starts and sallies of our last encounter  
Were natural enough ; but that, I trust,  
Is all gone by. You have cast off the chains  
That fettered your nobility of mind—  
Delivered heart and head !

Let us to Palestine ;

This is a paltry field for enterprise.

Mar. Ay, what shall we encounter next ?  
This issue—

'Twas nothing more than darkness deepening  
darkness,

And weakness crowned with the impotence  
of death !—

Your pupil is, you see, an apt proficient.  
(*ironically.*)

Start not !—Here is another face hard by ;  
Come, let us take a peep at both together,  
And, with a voice at which the dead will  
quake,

Resound the praise of your morality—  
Of this too much.

[*Drawing OSWALD towards the Cottage—  
stops short at the door.*]

Men are there, millions, Oswald,  
Who with bare hands would have plucked  
out thy heart

And flung it to the dogs : but I am raised  
Above, or sunk below, all further sense  
Of provocation. Leave me, with the weight  
Of that old Man's forgiveness on thy heart,  
Pressing as heavily as it doth on mine.

Coward I have been ; know, there lies not  
now

Within the compass of a mortal thought,  
A deed that I would shrink from ;—but to  
endure,

That is my destiny. May it be thine :  
Thy office, thy ambition, be henceforth  
To feed remorse, to welcome every sting  
Of penitential anguish, yea with tears.

When seas and continents shall lie between  
us—

The wider space the better—we may find  
In such a course fit links of sympathy,  
An incommunicable rivalry  
Maintained, for peaceful ends beyond our  
view.

[*Confused voices—several of the band enter  
—rush upon OSWALD, and seize him.*]

One of them. I would have dogged him  
to the jaws of hell—

Osw. Ha ! is it so !—That vagrant Hag !  
—this comes

Of having left a thing like her alive !

[*Aside.*]

Several voices. Despatch him !

Osw. If I pass beneath a rock  
And shout, and, with the echo of my voice,  
Bring down a heap of rubbish, and it crush  
me,

I die without dishonour. Famished, starved,  
A Fool and Coward blended to my wish !

[*Smiles scornfully and exultingly at  
MARMADUKE.*]

Wal. 'Tis done ! (*Stabs him*).

Another of the band. Theruthless Traitor !  
Mar. A rash deed !—

With that reproof I do resign a station  
Of which I have been proud.

Wil. (*approaching MARMADUKE*). O  
my poor Master !

Mar. Discerning Monitor, my faithful  
Wilfred,

Why art thou here ?

[*Turning to WALLACE.*]

Wallace, upon these Borders,  
Many there be whose eyes will not want  
cause

To weep that I am gone. Brothers in  
arms !

Raise on that dreary Waste a monument  
That may record my story : nor let words—  
Few must they be, and delicate in their  
touch

As light itself—be there withheld from Her  
Who, through most wicked arts, was made  
an orphan

By One who would have died a thousand  
times,

To shield her from a moment's harm. To  
you,

Wallace and Wilfred, I commend the Lady,  
By lowly nature reared, as if to make her  
In all things worthier of that noble birth,

Whose long-suspended rights are now on the eve

Of restoration : with your tenderest care  
Watch over her, I pray—sustain her—

*Several of the band (eagerly).* Captain !

*Mar.* No more of that ; in silence hear my doom :

A hermitage has furnished fit relief  
To some offenders : other penitents,  
Less patient in their wretchedness, have fallen,

Like the old Roman, on their own sword's point.

They had their choice : a wanderer *must* / go,

The Spectre of that innocent Man, my guide.

No human ear shall ever hear me speak ;  
No human dwelling ever give me food,  
Or sleep, or rest : but, over waste and wild,  
In search of nothing, that this earth can give,

But expiation, will I wander on—

A Man by pain and thought compelled to live,

Yet loathing life—till anger is appeased  
In Heaven, and Mercy gives me leave to die.

1795-96.

### THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

This arose out of my observation of the affecting music of these birds hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the Spring morning.

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,

Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years :

Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard

In the silence of morning the song of the Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails her ?  
She sees

A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;  
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,

And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,

Down which she so often has tripped with her pail ;

And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,

The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven : but they fade,

The mist and the river, the hill and the shade :

The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,

And the colours have all passed away from her eyes !

1797.

### THE BIRTH OF LOVE

Translated from some French stanzas by Francis Wrangham, and printed in "Poems by Francis Wrangham, M.A."

WHEN Love was born of heavenly line,

What dire intrigues disturbed Cythera's joy !

Till Venus cried, "A mother's heart is mine ;

None but myself shall nurse my boy."

But, infant as he was, the child

In that divine embrace enchanted lay ;

And, by the beauty of the vase beguiled,  
Forgot the beverage—and pined away.

"And must my offspring languish in my sight ?"

(Alive to all a mother's pain,

The Queen of Beauty thus her court addressed)

"No : Let the most discreet of all my train

Receive him to her breast :

Think all, he is the God of young delight."

Then TENDERNESS with CANDOUR joined,  
And GAIETY the charming office sought ;

Nor even DELICACY stayed behind :

But none of those fair Graces brought

Wherewith to nurse the child—and still he pined.

Some fond hearts to COMPLIANCE seemed inclined ;

But she had surely spoiled the boy :

And sad experience forbade a thought  
On the wild Goddess of VOLUPTUOUS JOY.

Long undecided lay th' important choice,  
Till of the beauteous court, at length, a voice

Pronounced the name of HOPE :—The  
conscious child

Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.

'Tis said ENJOYMENT (who averred

The charge belonged to her alone)

Jealous that HOPE had been preferred

Laid snares to make the babe her own.

Of INNOCENCE the garb she took,  
The blushing mien and downcast look ;

And came her services to proffer :

And HOPE (what has not Hope believed !)

By that seducing air deceived,

Accepted of the offer.

It happened that, to sleep inclined,

Deluded HOPE for one short hour

To that false INNOCENCE's power

Her little charge consigned.

The Goddess then her lap with sweetmeats  
filled

And gave, in handfuls gave, the treacher-  
ous store :

A wild delirium first the infant thrilled ;

But soon upon her breast he sunk—to  
wake no more. 1795.

### A NIGHT-PIECE

Composed on the road between Nether Stowey  
and Alfoxden, extempore. I distinctly recollect  
the very moment when I was struck, as described,  
—"He looks up—the clouds are split," etc.

—THE sky is overcast  
With a continuous cloud of texture close,  
Heavy and wan, all whitened by the Moon,  
Which through that veil is indistinctly seen,  
A dull, contracted circle, yielding light  
So feebly spread, that not a shadow falls,  
Chequering the ground—from rock, plant,  
tree, or tower.

At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam  
Startles the pensive traveller while he treads  
His lonesome path, with unobserving eye  
Bent earthwards ; he looks up—the clouds  
are split

Asunder,—and above his head he sees  
The clear Moon, and the glory of the  
heavens.

There, in a black-blue vault she sails along,  
Followed by multitudes of stars, that, small  
And sharp, and bright, along the dark  
abyss

Drive as she drives : how fast they wheel  
away,

Yet vanish not !—the wind is in the tree,  
But they are silent ;—still they roll along  
Immeasurably distant ; and the vault,  
Built round by those white clouds, enor-  
mous clouds,

Still deepens its unfathomable depth.

At length the Vision closes ; and the mind,

Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,

Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,

Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

1798.

### WE ARE SEVEN

Written at Alfoxden in the spring of 1798,  
under circumstances somewhat remarkable. The  
little girl who is the heroine I met within the area  
of Goodrich Castle in the year 1793. Having left  
the Isle of Wight and crossed Salisbury Plain, as  
mentioned in the preface to "Guilt and Sorrow,"  
I proceeded by Bristol up the Wye, and so on to  
North Wales, to the Vale of Clwydd, where I  
spent my summer under the roof of the father of  
my friend, Robert Jones. In reference to this  
Poem I will here mention one of the most re-  
markable facts in my own poetic history and that  
of Mr. Coleridge. In the spring of the year 1798,  
he, my Sister, and myself, started from Alfoxden,  
pretty late in the afternoon, with a view to visit  
Lenton and the valley of Stones near it ; and as  
our united funds were very small, we agreed to  
defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem,  
to be sent to the New Monthly Magazine set up  
by Phillips the bookseller, and edited by Dr.  
Aikin. Accordingly we set off and proceeded  
along the Quantock Hills towards Watchet, and  
in the course of this walk was planned the poem  
of the "Ancient Mariner," founded on a dream,  
as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend, Mr. Cruik-  
shank. Much the greatest part of the story was

Mr. Coleridge's invention ; but certain parts I myself suggested :—for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime, and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvock's Voyages a day or two before that while doubling Cape Horn they frequently saw Albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea-fowl, some extending their wings twelve or fifteen feet. "Suppose," said I, "you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary Spirits of those regions take upon them to avenge the crime." The incident was thought fit for the purpose and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The Gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time ; at least, not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous afterthought. We began the composition together on that, to me, memorable evening. I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular :—

"And listened like a three years' child ;  
The Mariner had his will."

These trifling contributions, all but one (which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded) slipped out of his mind as they well might. As we endeavoured to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening) our respective manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. We returned after a few days from a delightful tour, of which I have many pleasant, and some of them droll-enough, recollections. We returned by Dulverton to Alfoxden. The "Ancient Mariner" grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five pounds, and we began to talk of a Volume, which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has told the world, of poems chiefly on supernatural subjects taken from common life, but looked at, as much as might be, through an imaginative medium. Accordingly I wrote "The Idiot Boy," "Her eyes are wild," etc., "We are seven," "The Thorn," and some others. To return to "We are seven," the piece that called forth this note, I composed it while walking in the grove at Alfoxden. My friends will not deem it too trifling to relate that while walking to and fro I composed the last stanza first, having begun with the last line. When it was all but finished, I came in and recited it to Mr. Coleridge and my Sister,

and said, "A prefatory stanza must be added, and I should sit down to our little tea-meal with greater pleasure if my task were finished." I mentioned in substance what I wished to be expressed, and Coleridge immediately threw off the stanza thus :—

"A little child, dear brother Jem,"—

I objected to the rhyme, "dear brother Jem," as being ludicrous, but we all enjoyed the joke of hitching-in our friend, James T——'s name, who was familiarly called Jem. He was the brother of the dramatist, and this reminds me of an anecdote which it may be worth while here to notice. The said Jem got a sight of the Lyrical Ballads as it was going through the press at Bristol, during which time I was residing in that city. One evening he came to me with a grave face, and said, "Wordsworth, I have seen the volume that Coleridge and you are about to publish. There is one poem in it which I earnestly entreat you will cancel, for, if published, it will make you everlastingly ridiculous." I answered that I felt much obliged by the interest he took in my good name as a writer, and begged to know what was the unfortunate piece he alluded to. He said, "It is called 'We are seven.'" Nay ! said I, that shall take its chance, however, and he left me in despair. I have only to add that in the spring of 1841 I revisited Goodrich Castle, not having seen that part of the Wye since I met the little Girl there in 1793. It would have given me greater pleasure to have found in the neighbouring hamlet traces of one who had interested me so much ; but that was impossible, as unfortunately I did not even know her name. The ruin, from its position and features, is a most impressive object. I could not but deeply regret that its solemnity was impaired by a fantastic new Castle set up on a projection of the same ridge, as if to show how far modern art can go in surpassing all that could be done by antiquity and nature with their united graces, remembrances, and associations.

——A SIMPLE Child,

That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death ?

I met a little cottage Girl :  
She was eight years old, she said ;  
Her hair was thick with many a curl  
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad :  
Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;  
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid,  
How many may you be?"  
"How many? Seven in all," she said  
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."  
She answered, "Seven are we;  
And two of us at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea.

"Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
My sister and my brother;  
And, in the church-yard cottage, I  
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea,  
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,  
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,  
"Seven boys and girls are we;  
Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little Maid,  
Your limbs they are alive;  
If two are in the church-yard laid,  
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be  
seen,"

The little Maid replied,  
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's  
door,  
And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,  
My kerchief there I hem;  
And there upon the ground I sit,  
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sunset, Sir,  
When it is light and fair,  
I take my little porringer,  
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;  
In bed she moaning lay,  
Till God released her of her pain;  
And then she went away.

"So in the church-yard she was laid;  
And, when the grass was dry,  
Together round her grave we played,  
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with  
snow,  
And I could run and slide,  
My brother John was forced to go,  
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,  
"If they two are in heaven?"  
Quick was the little Maid's reply,  
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!  
Their spirits are in heaven!"  
"Twas throwing words away; for still  
The little Maid would have her will,  
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

1798.

## ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS

"Retine vim istam, falsa enim dicam, si coges."  
—EUSEBIUS.

This was suggested in front of Alfoxden. The Boy was a son of my friend, Basil Montagu, who had been two or three years under our care. The name of Kilve is from a village on the Bristol Channel, about a mile from Alfoxden; and the name of Liswynn Farm was taken from a beautiful spot on the Wye. When Mr. Coleridge, my Sister, and I, had been visiting the famous John Thelwall, who had taken refuge from politics, after a trial for high treason, with a view to bring up his family by the profits of agriculture, which proved as unfortunate a speculation as that he had fled from, Coleridge and he had both been public lecturers; Coleridge mingling, with his politics, Theology, from which the other elocutionist abstained, unless it were for the sake of a sneer. This quondam community of public employment induced Thelwall to visit Coleridge at Nether Stowey, where he fell in my way. He really was a man of extraordinary talent, an affectionate husband, and a good father. Though brought up in the City, he was truly sensible of the beauty of natural objects. I remember once, when Coleridge, he, and I were seated together upon the turf on the brink of a stream in the most beautiful part of the most beautiful glen of Alfoxden, Coleridge exclaimed, "This is a place to reconcile one to all the jarrings and conflicts of the wide world."—"Nay," said Thelwall, "to make one forget them altogether." The visit of this man to Coleridge was, as I believe Coleridge has related, the occasion of a spy being sent by Government to watch our proceedings, which were, I can say with truth, such as the world at large would have thought ludicrously harmless.



I HAVE a boy of five years old ;  
His face is fair and fresh to see ;  
His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,  
And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,  
Our quiet home all full in view,  
And held such intermitted talk  
As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran ;  
I thought of Kilve's delightful shore,  
Our pleasant home when spring began,  
A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear  
Some fond regrets to entertain ;  
With so much happiness to spare,  
I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet  
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,  
From shade to sunshine, and as fleet  
From sunshine back to shade.

Birds warbled round me—and each trace  
Of inward sadness had its charm ;  
Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,  
And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim  
And graceful in his rustic dress !  
And, as we talked, I questioned him,  
In very idleness.

"Now tell me, had you rather be,"  
I said, and took him by the arm,  
"On Kilve's smooth shore, by the green sea,  
Or here at Liswyn farm?"

In careless mood he looked at me,  
While still I held him by the arm,  
And said, "At Kilve I'd rather be  
Than here at Liswyn farm."

"Now, little Edward, say why so :  
My little Edward, tell me why."—  
"I cannot tell, I do not know."—  
"Why, this is strange," said I ;

"For, here are woods, hills smooth and  
warm :  
There surely must some reason be  
Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm  
For Kilve by the green sea."

At this, my boy hung down his head,  
He blushed with shame, nor made reply ;  
And three times to the child I said,  
"Why, Edward, tell me why?"

His head he raised—there was in sight,  
It caught his eye, he saw it plain—  
Upon the house-top, glittering bright,  
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,  
And eased his mind with this reply :  
"At Kilve there was no weather-cock ;  
And that's the reason why."

O dearest, dearest boy ! my heart  
For better lore would seldom yearn,  
Could I but teach the hundredth part  
Of what from thee I learn.

1798.

## THE THORN

Written at Alfoxden. Arose out of my observing, on the ridge of Quantock Hill, on a stormy day, a thorn which I had often past, in calm and bright weather, without noticing it. I said to myself, "Cannot I by some invention do as much to make this Thorn permanently an impressive object as the storm has made it to my eyes at this moment?" I began the poem accordingly, and composed it with great rapidity. Sir George Beaumont painted a picture from it which Wilkie thought his best. He gave it me ; though when he saw it several times at Rydal Mount afterwards, he said, "I could make a better, and would like to paint the same subject over again." The sky in this picture is nobly done, but it reminds one too much of Wilson. The only fault, however, of any consequence is the female figure, which is too old and decrepit for one likely to frequent an eminence on such a call.

I

"THERE is a Thorn—it looks so old,  
In truth, you'd find it hard to say  
How it could ever have been young,  
It looks so old and grey.  
Not higher than a two years' child  
It stands erect, this aged Thorn ;  
No leaves it has, no prickly points ;  
It is a mass of knotted joints,  
A wretched thing forlorn.  
It stands erect, and like a stone  
With lichens is it overgrown.

## II

"Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,  
With lichens to the very top,  
And hung with heavy tufts of moss,  
A melancholy crop :  
Up from the earth these mosses creep,  
And this poor Thorn they clasp it round  
So close, you'd say that they are bent  
With plain and manifest intent  
To drag it to the ground ;  
And all have joined in one endeavour  
To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

## III

"High on a mountain's highest ridge,  
Where oft the stormy winter gale  
Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds  
It sweeps from vale to vale ;  
Not five yards from the mountain path,  
This Thorn you on your left espy ;  
And to the left, three yards beyond,  
You see a little muddy pond  
Of water—never dry  
Though but of compass small, and bare  
To thirsty suns and parching air.

## IV

"And, close beside this aged Thorn,  
There is a fresh and lovely sight,  
A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,  
Just half a foot in height,  
All lovely colours there you see,  
All colours that were ever seen ;  
And mossy network too is there,  
As if by hand of lady fair  
The work had woven been ;  
And cups, the darlings of the eye,  
So deep is their vermilion dye.

## V

"Ah me ! what lovely tints are there  
Of olive green and scarlet bright,  
In spikes, in branches, and in stars,  
Green, red, and pearly white !  
This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,  
Which close beside the Thorn you see,  
So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,  
Is like an infant's grave in size,  
As like as like can be :  
But never, never any where,  
An infant's grave was half so fair.

## VI

"Now would you see this aged Thorn,  
This pond, and beauteous hill of moss,  
You must take care and choose your time  
The mountain when to cross.  
For oft there sits between the heap  
So like an infant's grave in size,  
And that same pond of which I spoke,  
A Woman in a scarlet cloak,  
And to herself she cries,  
'Oh misery ! oh misery !  
Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'

## VII

"At all times of the day and night  
This wretched Woman thither goes ;  
And she is known to every star,  
And every wind that blows ;  
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits  
When the blue daylight's in the skies,  
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And to herself she cries,  
'Oh misery ! oh misery !  
Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'

## VIII

"Now wherefore, thus, by day and night,  
In rain, in tempest, and in snow,  
Thus to the dreary mountain-top  
Does this poor Woman go ?  
And why sits she beside the Thorn  
When the blue daylight's in the sky  
Or when the whirlwind's on the hill,  
Or frosty air is keen and still,  
And wherefore does she cry ?—  
O wherefore ? wherefore ? tell me why  
Does she repeat that doleful cry ?"

## IX

"I cannot tell ; I wish I could ;  
For the true reason no one knows :  
But would you gladly view the spot,  
The spot to which she goes ;  
The hillock like an infant's grave,  
The pond—and Thorn, so old and grey ;  
Pass by her door—'tis seldom shut—  
And, if you see her in her hut—  
Then to the spot away !  
I never heard of such as dare  
Approach the spot when she is there."

## X

"But wherefore to the mountain-top  
Can this unhappy Woman go?  
Whatever star is in the skies,  
Whatever wind may blow?"  
"Full twenty years are past and gone  
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)  
Gave with a maiden's true good-will  
Her company to Stephen Hill;  
And she was blithe and gay,  
While friends and kindred all approved  
Of him whom tenderly she loved.

## XI

"And they had fixed the wedding day,  
The morning that must wed them both;  
But Stephen to another Maid  
Had sworn another oath;  
And, with this other Maid, to church  
Unthinking Stephen went—  
Poor Martha! on that woeful day  
A pang of pitiless dismay  
Into her soul was sent;  
A fire was kindled in her breast,  
Which might not burn itself to rest.

## XII

"They say, full six months after this,  
While yet the summer leaves were green,  
She to the mountain-top would go,  
And there was often seen.  
What could she seek?—or wish to hide?  
Her state to any eye was plain;  
She was with child, and she was mad;  
Yet often was she sober sad  
From her exceeding pain.  
O guilty Father—would that death  
Had saved him from that breach of faith!

## XIII

"Sad case for such a brain to hold  
Communion with a stirring child!  
Sad case, as you may think, for one  
Who had a brain so wild!  
Last Christmas-eve we talked of this,  
And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen  
Held that the unborn infant wrought  
About its mother's heart, and brought  
Her senses back again;  
And, when at last her time drew near,  
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

## XIV

"More know I not, I wish I did,  
And it should all be told to you;  
For what became of this poor child  
No mortal ever knew;  
Nay—if a child to her was born  
No earthly tongue could ever tell;  
And if 'twas born alive or dead,  
Far less could this with proof be said;  
But some remember well,  
That Martha Ray about this time  
Would up the mountain often climb.

## XV

"And all that winter, when at night  
The wind blew from the mountain-peak,  
'Twas worth your while, though in the dark,  
The churchyard path to seek:  
For many a time and oft were heard  
Cries coming from the mountain head:  
Some plainly living voices were;  
And others, I've heard many swear,  
Were voices of the dead:  
I cannot think, what'er they say,  
They had to do with Martha Ray.

## XVI

"But that she goes to this old Thorn,  
The Thorn which I described to you,  
And there sits in a scarlet cloak  
I will be sworn is true.  
For one day with my telescope,  
To view the ocean wide and bright,  
When to this country first I came,  
Ere I had heard of Martha's name,  
I climbed the mountain's height:—  
A storm came on, and I could see  
No object higher than my knee.

## XVII

"'Twas mist and rain, and storm and rain:  
No screen, no fence could I discover;  
And then the wind! in sooth, it was  
A wind full ten times over.  
I looked around, I thought I saw  
A jutting crag,—and off I ran,  
Head-foremost, through the driving rain,  
The shelter of the crag to gain;  
And, as I am a man,  
Instead of jutting crag, I found  
A Woman seated on the ground.

## XVIII

"I did not speak—I saw her face ;  
Her face !—it was enough for me ;  
I turned about and heard her cry,  
'Oh misery ! oh misery !'  
And there she sits, until the moon  
Through half the clear blue sky will go ;  
And, when the little breezes make  
The waters of the pond to shake,  
As all the country know,  
She shudders, and you hear her cry,  
'Oh misery ! oh misery !'"

## XIX

"But what's the Thorn? and what the pond?

And what the hill of moss to her?  
And what the creeping breeze that comes  
The little pond to stir?"

"I cannot tell ; but some will say  
She hanged her baby on the tree ;  
Some say she drowned it in the pond,  
Which is a little step beyond :  
But all and each agree,  
The little Babe was buried there,  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

## XX

"I've heard, the moss is spotted red  
With drops of that poor infant's blood ;  
But kill a new-born infant thus,  
I do not think she could !  
Some say, if to the pond you go,  
And fix on it a steady view,  
The shadow of a babe you trace,  
A baby and a baby's face,  
And that it looks at you ;  
Whene'er you look on it, 'tis plain  
The baby looks at you again.

## XXI

"And some had sworn an oath that she  
Should be to public justice brought ;  
And for the little infant's bones  
With spades they would have sought.  
But instantly the hill of moss  
Before their eyes began to stir !  
And, for full fifty yards around,  
The grass—it shook upon the ground !  
Yet all do still aver  
The little Babe lies buried there,  
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

## XXII

"I cannot tell how this may be,  
But plain it is the Thorn is bound  
With heavy tufts of moss that strive  
To drag it to the ground ;  
And this I know, full many a time,  
When she was on the mountain high,  
By day, and in the silent night,  
When all the stars shone clear and bright,  
That I have heard her cry,  
'Oh misery ! oh misery !  
Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'"

1798.

## GOODY BLAKE AND HARRY GILL

## A TRUE STORY

Written at Alfoxden. The incident from Dr.  
Darwin's *Zoönomia*.

OH ! what's the matter ? what's the matter ?  
What is't that ails young Harry Gill ?  
That evermore his teeth they chatter,  
Chatter, chatter, chatter still !  
Of waistcoats Harry has no lack,  
Good duffle grey, and flannel fine ;  
He has a blanket on his back,  
And coats enough to smother nine.

In March, December, and in July,  
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ;  
The neighbours tell, and tell you truly,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
At night, at morning, and at noon,  
'Tis all the same with Harry Gill ;  
Beneath the sun, beneath the moon,  
His teeth they chatter, chatter still !

Young Harry was a lusty drover,  
And who so stout of limb as he ?  
His cheeks were red as ruddy clover ;  
His voice was like the voice of three.  
Old Goody Blake was old and poor ;  
Ill fed she was, and thinly clad ;  
And any man who passed her door  
Might see how poor a hut she had.

All day she spun in her poor dwelling :  
And then her three hours' work at night,  
Alas ! 'twas hardly worth the telling,  
It would not pay for candle-light.

Remote from sheltered village-green,  
On a hill's northern side she dwelt,  
Where from sea-blasts the hawthorns lean,  
And hoary dews are slow to melt.

By the same fire to boil their pottage,  
Two poor old Dames, as I have known,  
Will often live in one small cottage ;  
But she, poor Woman ! housed alone,  
'Twas well enough when summer came,  
The long, warm, lightsome summer-day,  
Then at her door the *canty* Dame  
Would sit, as any linnet, gay.

But when the ice our streams did fether,  
Oh then how her old bones would shake !  
You would have said, if you had met her,  
'Twas a hard time for Goody Blake.  
Her evenings then were dull and dead :  
Sad case it was, as you may think,  
For very cold to go to bed ;  
And then for cold not sleep a wink.

O joy for her ! whene'er in winter  
The winds at night had made a rout ;  
And scattered many a lusty splinter  
And many a rotten bough about.  
Yet never had she, well or sick,  
As every man who knew her says,  
A pile beforehand, turf or stick,  
Enough to warm her for three days.

Now, when the frost was past enduring,  
And made her poor old bones to ache,  
Could any thing be more alluring  
Than an old hedge to Goody Blake ?  
And, now and then, it must be said,  
When her old bones were cold and chill,  
She left her fire, or left her bed,  
To seek the hedge of Harry Gill.

Now Harry he had long suspected  
This trespass of old Goody Blake ;  
And vowed that she should be detected—  
That he on her would vengeance take.  
And oft from his warm fire he'd go,  
And to the fields his road would take ;  
And there, at night, in frost and snow,  
He watched to seize old Goody Blake.

And once, behind a rick of barley,  
Thus looking out did Harry stand :  
The moon was full and shining clearly,  
And crisp with frost the stubble land.

—He hears a noise—he's all awake—  
Again ?—on tip-toe down the hill  
He softly creeps—'tis Goody Blake ;  
She's at the hedge of Harry Gill !

Right glad was he when he beheld her :  
Stick after stick did Goody pull :  
He stood behind a bush of elder,  
Till she had filled her apron full.  
When with her load she turned about,  
The by-way back again to take ;  
He started forward, with a shout,  
And sprang upon poor Goody Blake.

And fiercely by the arm he took her,  
And by the arm he held her fast,  
And fiercely by the arm he shook her,  
And cried, "I've caught you then at  
last !"—

Then Goody, who had nothing said,  
Her bundle from her lap let fall ;  
And, kneeling on the sticks, she prayed  
To God that is the judge of all.

She prayed, her withered hand uprearing,  
While Harry held her by the arm—  
"God ! who art never out of hearing,  
O may he never more be warm !"  
The cold, cold moon above her head,  
Thus on her knees did Goody pray ;  
Young Harry heard what she had said :  
And icy cold he turned away.

He went complaining all the morrow  
That he was cold and very chill :  
His face was gloom, his heart was sorrow,  
Alas ! that day for Harry Gill !  
That day he wore a riding-coat,  
But not a whit the warmer he :  
Another was on Thursday brought,  
And ere the Sabbath he had three.

'Twas all in vain, a useless matter,  
And blankets were about him pinned ;  
Yet still his jaws and teeth they clatter ;  
Like a loose casement in the wind.  
And Harry's flesh it fell away ;  
And all who see him say, 'tis plain,  
That, live as long as live he may,  
He never will be warm again.

No word to any man he utters,  
A-bed or up, to young or old ;  
But ever to himself he mutters,  
"Poor Harry Gill is very cold."

A-bed or up, by night or day ;  
 His teeth they chatter, chatter still.  
 Now think, ye farmers all, I pray,  
 Of Goody Blake and Harry Gill !  
 1798.

## HER EYES ARE WILD

Written at Alfoxden. The subject was reported to me by a lady of Bristol, who had seen the poor creature.

## I

HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,  
 The sun has burnt her coal-black hair ;  
 Her eyebrows have a rusty stain,  
 And she came far from over the main.  
 She has a baby on her arm,  
 Or else she were alone :  
 And underneath the hay-stack warm,  
 And on the greenwood stone,  
 She talked and sung the woods among,  
 And it was in the English tongue.

## II

"Sweet babe ! they say that I am mad,  
 But nay, my heart is far too glad ;  
 And I am happy when I sing  
 Full many a sad and doleful thing :  
 Then, lovely baby, do not fear !  
 I pray thee have no fear of me ;  
 But safe as in a cradle, here,  
 My lovely baby ! thou shalt be :  
 To thee I know too much I owe ;  
 I cannot work thee any woe.

## III

"A fire was once within my brain ;  
 And in my head a dull, dull pain ;  
 And fiendish faces, one, two, three,  
 Hung at my breast, and pulled at me ;  
 But then there came a sight of joy ;  
 It came at once to do me good ;  
 I waked, and saw my little boy,  
 My little boy of flesh and blood ;  
 Oh joy for me that sight to see !  
 For he was here, and only he.

## IV

"Suck, little babe, oh suck again !  
 It cools my blood ; it cools my brain ;

Thy lips I feel them, baby ! they  
 Draw from my heart the pain away.  
 Oh ! press me with thy little hand ;  
 It loosens something at my chest ;  
 About that tight and deadly band  
 I feel thy little fingers prest.  
 The breeze I see is in the tree :  
 It comes to cool my babe and me.

## V

"Oh ! love me, love me, little boy !  
 Thou art thy mother's only joy ;  
 And do not dread the waves below,  
 When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go ;  
 The high crag cannot work me harm,  
 Nor leaping torrents when they howl ;  
 The babe I carry on my arm,  
 He saves for me my precious soul ;  
 Then happy lie ; for blest am I ;  
 Without me my sweet babe would die.

## VI

"Then do not fear, my boy ! for thee  
 Bold as a lion will I be ;  
 And I will always be thy guide,  
 Through hollow snows and rivers wide.  
 I'll build an Indian bower ; I know  
 The leaves that make the softest bed :  
 And, if from me thou wilt not go,  
 But still be true till I am dead,  
 My pretty thing ! then thou shalt sing  
 As merry as the birds in spring.

## VII

"Thy father cares not for my breast,  
 'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest ;  
 'Tis all thine own !—and, if its hue  
 Be changed, that was so fair to view,  
 'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove !  
 My beauty, little child, is flown,  
 But thou wilt live with me in love,  
 And what if my poor cheek be brown ?  
 'Tis well for me, thou canst not see  
 How pale and wan it else would be.

## VIII

"Dread not their taunts, my little Life ;  
 I am thy father's wedded wife ;  
 And underneath the spreading tree  
 We two will live in honesty.

If his sweet boy he could forsake,  
With me he never would have stayed :  
From him no harm my babe can take ;  
But he, poor man ! is wretched made ;  
And every day we two will pray  
For him that's gone and far away.

## IX

"I'll teach my boy the sweetest things :  
I'll teach him how the owlet sings.  
My little babe ! thy lips are still,  
And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.  
—Where art thou gone, my own dear  
child ?

What wicked looks are those I see ?  
Alas ! alas ! that look so wild,  
It never, never came from me :  
If thou art mad, my pretty lad,  
Then I must be for ever sad.

## X

"Oh ! smile on me, my little lamb !  
For I thy own dear mother am :  
My love for thee has well been tried :  
I've sought thy father far and wide.  
I know the poisons of the shade ;  
I know the earth-nuts fit for food :  
Then, pretty dear, be not afraid :  
We'll find thy father in the wood.  
Now laugh and be gay, to the woods away !  
And there, my babe, we'll live for aye."

1798.

## SIMON LEE

## THE OLD HUNTSMAN ;

WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS  
CONCERNED

This old man had been huntsman to the squires of Alfoxden, which, at the time we occupied it, belonged to a minor. The old man's cottage stood upon the common, a little way from the entrance to Alfoxden Park. But it had disappeared. Many other changes had taken place in the adjoining village, which I could not but notice with a regret more natural than well-considered. Improvements but rarely appear such to those who, after long intervals of time, revisit places they have had much pleasure in. It is unnecessary to add, the fact was as mentioned in the poem ; and I have, after an interval of forty-five years, the

image of the old man as fresh before my eyes as if I had seen him yesterday. The expression when the hounds were out, "I dearly love their voice," was word for word from his own lips.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,  
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,  
An old Man dwells, a little man,—  
'Tis said he once was tall.  
Full five-and-thirty years he lived  
A running huntsman merry ;  
And still the centre of his cheek  
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,  
And hill and valley rang with glee  
When Echo banded, round and round,  
The halloo of Simon Lee.  
In those proud days, he little cared  
For husbandry or tillage ;  
To blither tasks did Simon rouse  
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,  
Could leave both man and horse behind ;  
And often, ere the chase was done,  
He reeled, and was stone-blind.  
And still there's something in the world  
At which his heart rejoices ;  
For when the chiming hounds are out,  
He dearly loves their voices !

But, oh the heavy change !—bereft  
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred,  
see !

Old Simon to the world is left  
In liveried poverty.  
His Master's dead,—and no one now  
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor ;  
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead ;  
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick ;  
His body, dwindled and awry,  
Rests upon ankles swollen and thick ;  
His legs are thin and dry.  
One prop he has, and only one,  
His wife, an aged woman,  
Lives with him, near the waterfall,  
Upon the village Common.

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,  
Not twenty paces from the door,  
A scrap of land they have, but they  
Are poorest of the poor.

This scrap of land he from the heath  
 Enclosed when he was stronger ;  
 But what to them avails the land  
 Which he can till no longer ?

Oft, working by her Husband's side,  
 Ruth does what Simon cannot do ;  
 For she, with scanty cause for pride,  
 Is stouter of the two.  
 And, though you with your utmost skill  
 From labour could not wean them,  
 'Tis little, very little—all  
 That they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store  
 As he to you will tell,  
 For still, the more he works, the more  
 Do his weak ankles swell.  
 My gentle Reader, I perceive  
 How patiently you've waited,  
 And now I fear that you expect  
 Some tale will be related.

O Reader ! had you in your mind  
 Such stores as silent thought can bring,  
 O gentle Reader ! you would find  
 A tale in every thing.  
 What more I have to say is short,  
 And you must kindly take it :  
 It is no tale ; but, should you think,  
 Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see  
 This old Man doing all he could  
 To unearth the root of an old tree,  
 A stump of rotten wood.  
 The mattock tottered in his hand ;  
 So vain was his endeavour,  
 That at the root of the old tree  
 He might have worked for ever.

" You're overtasked, good Simon Lee,  
 Give me your tool," to him I said ;  
 And at the word right gladly he  
 Received my proffered aid.  
 I struck, and with a single blow  
 The tangled root I severed,  
 At which the poor old Man so long  
 And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,  
 And thanks and praises seemed to run  
 So fast out of his heart, I thought  
 They never would have done.

—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds  
 With coldness still returning ;  
 Alas ! the gratitude of men  
 Hath oftener left me mourning.

1798.

# LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

Actually composed while I was sitting by the  
 side of the brook that runs down from the Comb,  
 in which stands the village of Alford, through the  
 grounds of Alfoxden. It was a chosen resort of  
 mine. The brook fell down a sloping rock so as  
 to make a waterfall considerable for that country,  
 and across the pool below had fallen a tree, an  
 ash if I rightly remember, from which rose per-  
 pendicularly, boughs in search of the light inter-  
 cepted by the deep shade above. The boughs  
 bore leaves of green that for want of sunshine  
 had faded into almost lily-white ; and from the  
 underside of this natural sylvan bridge depended  
 long and beautiful tresses of ivy which waved  
 gently in the breeze that might poetically speaking  
 be called the breath of the waterfall. This motion  
 varied of course in proportion to the power of  
 water in the brook. When, with dear friends, I  
 revisited this spot, after an interval of more than  
 forty years, this interesting feature of the scene  
 was gone. To the owner of the place I could not  
 but regret that the beauty of this retired part of  
 the grounds had not tempted him to make it more  
 accessible by a path, not broad or obtrusive, but  
 sufficient for persons who love such scenes to creep  
 along without difficulty.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,  
 While in a grove I sate reclined,  
 In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
 Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
 The human soul that through me ran ;  
 And much it grieved my heart to think  
 What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green  
 bower,  
 The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;  
 And 'tis my faith that every flower  
 Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
 Their thoughts I cannot measure :—  
 But the least motion which they made  
 It seemed a thrill of pleasure.



The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air ;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man ?

1798.

## TO MY SISTER

Composed in front of Alfoxden House. My little boy-messenger on this occasion was the son of Basil Montagu. The larch mentioned in the first stanza was standing when I revisited the place in May 1841, more than forty years after. I was disappointed that it had not improved in appearance as to size, nor had it acquired anything of the majesty of age, which, even though less perhaps than any other tree, the larch sometimes does. A few score yards from this tree, grew, when we inhabited Alfoxden, one of the most remarkable beech-trees ever seen. The ground sloped both towards and from it. It was of immense size, and threw out arms that struck into the soil, like those of the banyan-tree, and rose again from it. Two of the branches thus inserted themselves twice, which gave to each the appearance of a serpent moving along by gathering itself up in folds. One of the large boughs of this tree had been torn off by the wind before we left Alfoxden, but five remained. In 1841 we could barely find the spot where the tree had stood. So remarkable a production of nature could not have been wilfully destroyed.

It is the first mild day of March :  
Each minute sweeter than before  
The redbreast sings from the tall larch  
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,  
Which seems a sense of joy to yield  
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,  
And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)  
Now that our morning meal is done,  
Make haste, your morning task resign ;  
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you ;—and, pray,  
Put on with speed your woodland dress ;  
And bring no book : for this one day  
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate  
Our living calendar :  
We from to-day, my Friend, will date  
The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,  
From heart to heart is stealing,  
From earth to man, from man to earth :  
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more  
Than years of toiling reason :  
Our minds shall drink at every pore  
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,  
Which they shall long obey :  
We for the year to come may take  
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls  
About, below, above,  
We'll frame the measure of our souls :  
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come, I pray,  
With speed put on your woodland dress ;  
And bring no book : for this one day  
We'll give to idleness.

1798.

Observed in the holly-grove at Alfoxden, where these verses were written in the spring of 1799. I had the pleasure of again seeing, with dear friends, this grove in unimpaired beauty forty-one years after.

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill  
Rushed o'er the wood with startling sound ;  
Then—all at once the air was still,  
And showers of hailstones pattered round.  
Where leafless oaks towered high above,  
I sat within an undergrove  
Of tallest hollies, tall and green ;  
A fairer bower was never seen.  
From year to year the spacious floor  
With withered leaves is covered o'er,  
And all the year the bower is green.  
But see ! where'er the hailstones drop  
The withered leaves all skip and hop ;  
There's not a breeze—no breath of air—  
Yet here, and there, and everywhere  
Along the floor, beneath the shade  
By those embowering hollies made,  
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,

As if with pipes and music rare  
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,  
And all those leaves, in festive glee,  
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

1798.

### EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

This poem is a favourite among the Quakers, as I have learnt on many occasions. It was composed in front of the house at Alfoxden, in the spring of 1798.

"WHY, William, on that old grey stone,  
Thus for the length of half a day,  
Why, William, sit you thus alone,  
And dream your time away ?

"Where are your books?—that light be-  
queathed  
To Beings else forlorn and blind !  
Up ! up ! and drink the spirit breathed  
From dead men to their kind.

"You look round on your Mother Earth,  
As if she for no purpose bore you ;  
As if you were her first-born birth,  
And none had lived before you !"

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,  
When life was sweet, I knew not why,  
To me my good friend Matthew spake,  
And thus I made reply :

"The eye—it cannot choose but see ;  
We cannot bid the ear be still ;  
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,  
Against or with our will.

"Nor less I deem that there are Powers  
Which of themselves our minds impress ;  
That we can feed this mind of ours  
In a wise passiveness.

"Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum  
Of things for ever speaking,  
That nothing of itself will come,  
But we must still be seeking ?

"—Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,  
Conversing as I may,  
I sit upon this old grey stone,  
And dream my time away,"

1798.

### THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME  
SUBJECT

Up ! up ! my Friend, and quit your books ;  
Or surely you'll grow double :  
Up ! up ! my Friend, and clear your looks ;  
Why all this toil and trouble ?

The sun, above the mountain's head,  
A freshening lustre mellow  
Through all the long green fields has  
spread,  
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books ! 'tis a dull and endless strife :  
Come, hear the woodland linnet,  
How sweet his music ! on my life,  
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark ! how blithe the throstle sings !  
He, too, is no mean preacher :  
Come forth into the light of things,  
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,  
Our minds and hearts to bless—  
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,  
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings ;  
Our meddling intellect  
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things :—  
We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art ;  
Close up those barren leaves ;  
Come forth, and bring with you a heart  
That watches and receives.

1798.

### THE COMPLAINT

OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN

Written at Alfoxden, where I read Hearne's  
Journey with deep interest. It was composed  
for the volume of *Lyrical Ballads*.

When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he be unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert ; unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work HEARNE'S *Journey from Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean*. In the high northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the northern lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in the following poem.

## I

BEFORE I see another day,  
Oh let my body die away !  
In sleep I heard the northern gleams ;  
The stars, they were among my dreams ;  
In rustling conflict through the skies,  
I heard, I saw the flashes drive,  
And yet they are upon my eyes,  
And yet I am alive ;  
Before I see another day,  
Oh let my body die away !

## II

My fire is dead : it knew no pain ;  
Yet is it dead, and I remain :  
All stiff with ice the ashes lie ;  
And they are dead, and I will die.  
When I was well, I wished to live,  
For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire ;  
But they to me no joy can give,  
No pleasure now, and no desire.  
Then here contented will I lie !  
Alone, I cannot fear to die.

## III

Alas ! ye might have dragged me on  
Another day, a single one !  
Too soon I yielded to despair ;  
Why did ye listen to my prayer ?  
When ye were gone my limbs were stronger ;  
And oh, how grievously I rue,  
That, afterwards, a little longer,  
My friends, I did not follow you !  
For strong and without pain I lay,  
Dear friends, when ye were gone away.

## IV

My Child ! they gave thee to another,  
A woman who was not thy mother.  
When from my arms my Babe they took,  
On me how strangely did he look !  
Through his whole body something ran,  
A most strange working did I see ;  
—As if he strove to be a man,  
That he might pull the sledge for me :  
And then he stretched his arms, how wild !  
Oh mercy ! like a helpless child.

## V

My little joy ! my little pride !  
In two days more I must have died.  
Then do not weep and grieve for me ;  
I feel I must have died with thee.  
O wind, that o'er my head art flying  
The way my friends their course did bend,  
I should not feel the pain of dying,  
Could I with thee a message send ;  
Too soon, my friends, ye went away ;  
For I had many things to say.

## VI

I'll follow you across the snow ;  
Ye travel heavily and slow ;  
In spite of all my weary pain  
I'll look upon your tents again.  
—My fire is dead, and snowy white  
The water which beside it stood :  
The wolf has come to me to-night,  
And he has stolen away my food.  
For ever left alone am I ;  
Then wherefore should I fear to die ?

## VII

Young as I am, my course is run,  
I shall not see another sun ;  
I cannot lift my limbs to know  
If they have any life or no.  
My poor forsaken Child, if I  
For once could have thee close to me,  
With happy heart I then would die,  
And my last thought would happy be ;  
But thou, dear Babe, art far away,  
Nor shall I see another day.

## THE LAST OF THE FLOCK

Produced at the same time and for the same purpose. The incident occurred in the village of Holford, close by Alfoxden.

## I

IN distant countries have I been,  
And yet I have not often seen  
A healthy man, a man full grown,  
Weep in the public roads, alone.  
But such a one, on English ground,  
And in the broad highway, I met ;  
Along the broad highway he came,  
His cheeks with tears were wet :  
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad ;  
And in his arms a Lamb he had.

## II

He saw me, and he turned aside,  
As if he wished himself to hide :  
And with his coat did then essay  
To wipe those briny tears away.  
I followed him, and said, " My friend,  
What ails you ? wherefore weep you so ? "  
—" Shame on me, Sir ! this lusty Lamb,  
He makes my tears to flow.  
To-day I fetched him from the rock ;  
He is the last of all my flock.

## III

" When I was young, a single man,  
And after youthful follies ran,  
Though little given to care and thought,  
Yet, so it was, an ewe I bought ;  
And other sheep from her I raised,  
As healthy sheep as you might see ;  
And then I married, and was rich  
As I could wish to be ;  
Of sheep I numbered a full score,  
And every year increased my store.

## IV

" Year after year my stock it grew ;  
And from this one, this single ewe,  
Full fifty comely sheep I raised,  
As fine a flock as ever grazed !  
Upon the Quantock hills they fed ;  
They thrive, and we at home did thrive :  
—This lusty Lamb of all my store  
Is all that is alive ;  
And now I care not if we die,  
And perish all of poverty.

## V

" Six Children, Sir ! had I to feed ;  
Hard labour in a time of need !  
My pride was tamed, and in our grief  
I of the Parish asked relief.  
They said, I was a wealthy man ;  
My sheep upon the uplands fed,  
And it was fit that thence I took  
Whereof to buy us bread.  
' Do this : how can we give to you,'  
They cried, ' what to the poor is due ? '

## VI

" I sold a sheep, as they had said,  
And bought my little children bread,  
And they were healthy with their food  
For me—it never did me good.  
A woeful time it was for me,  
To see the end of all my gains,  
The pretty flock which I had reared  
With all my care and pains,  
To see it melt like snow away—  
For me it was a woeful day.

## VII

" Another still ! and still another !  
A little lamb, and then its mother !  
It was a vein that never stopped—  
Like blood - drops from my heart they  
dropped.

" Till thirty were not left alive  
They dwindled, dwindled, one by one  
And I may say, that many a time  
I wished they all were gone—  
Reckless of what might come at last  
Were but the bitter struggle past.

## VIII

" To wicked deeds I was inclined,  
And wicked fancies crossed my mind ;  
And every man I chanced to see,  
I thought he knew some ill of me :  
No peace, no comfort could I find,  
No ease, within doors or without ;  
And, crazily and wearily  
I went my work about ;  
And oft was moved to flee from home,  
And hide my head where wild beasts roam.

## IX

" Sir ! 'twas a precious flock to me,  
As dear as my own children be ;

For daily with my growing store  
 I loved my children more and more.  
 Alas ! it was an evil time ;  
 God cursed me in my sore distress ;  
 I prayed, yet every day I thought  
 I loved my children less ;  
 And every week, and every day,  
 My flock it seemed to melt away.

x

" They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see !  
 From ten to five, from five to three,  
 A lamb, a wether, and a ewe ;—  
 And then at last from three to two ;  
 And, of my fifty, yesterday  
 I had but only one :  
 And here it lies upon my arm,  
 Alas ! and I have none ;—  
 To-day I fetched it from the rock ;  
 It is the last of all my flock."

1798.

## THE IDIOT BOY

The last stanza—"The Cocks did crow to-  
 whoo, to-who, And the sun did shine so cold"—  
 was the foundation of the whole. The words  
 were reported to me by my dear friend, Thomas  
 Poole ; but I have since heard the same repeated  
 of other Idiots. Let me add that this long poem  
 was composed in the groves of Alfoxden, almost  
 extempore ; not a word, I believe, being corrected,  
 though one stanza was omitted. I mention this  
 in gratitude to those happy moments, for, in  
 truth, I never wrote anything with so much  
 glee.

'Tis eight o'clock,—a clear March night,  
 The moon is up,—the sky is blue,  
 The owlet, in the moonlight air,  
 Shouts from nobody knows where ;  
 He lengthens out his lonely shout,  
 Halloo ! halloo ! a long halloo !

—Why bustle thus about your door,  
 What means this bustle, Betty Foy ?  
 Why are you in this mighty fret ?  
 And why on horseback have you set  
 Him whom you love, your Idiot Boy ?

Scarcely a soul is out of bed ;  
 Good Betty, put him down again ;  
 His lips with joy they burr at you ;  
 But, Betty ! what has he to do  
 With stirrup, saddle, or with rein ?

But Betty's bent on her intent ;  
 For her good neighbour, Susan Gale,  
 Old Susan, she who dwells alone,  
 Is sick, and makes a piteous moan  
 As if her very life would fail.

There's not a house within a mile,  
 No hand to help them in distress ;  
 Old Susan lies a-bed in pain,  
 And sorely puzzled are the twain,  
 For what she ails they cannot guess.

And Betty's husband's at the wood,  
 Where by the week he doth abide,  
 A woodman in the distant vale ;  
 There's none to help poor Susan Gale ;  
 What must be done ? what will betide ?

And Betty from the lane has fetched  
 Her Pony, that is mild and good ;  
 Whether he be in joy or pain,  
 Feeding at will along the lane,  
 Or bringing faggots from the wood.

And he is all in travelling trim,—  
 And, by the moonlight, Betty Foy  
 Has on the well-girt saddle set  
 (The like was never heard of yet)  
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And he must post without delay  
 Across the bridge and through the dale,  
 And by the church, and o'er the down,  
 To bring a Doctor from the town,  
 Or she will die, old Susan Gale.

There is no need of boot or spur,  
 There is no need of whip or wand ;  
 For Johnny has his holly-bough,  
 And with a *hurly-burly* now  
 He shakes the green bough in his hand.

And Betty o'er and o'er has told  
 The Boy, who is her best delight,  
 Both what to follow, what to shun,  
 What do, and what to leave undone,  
 How turn to left, and how to right.

And Betty's most especial charge,  
 Was, " Johnny ! Johnny ! mind that you  
 Come home again, nor stop at all,—  
 Come home again, whate'er befall,  
 My Johnny, do, I pray you do."

To this did Johnny answer make,  
 Both with his head and with his hand,

And proudly shook the bridle too ;  
And then ! his words were not a few,  
Which Betty well could understand.

And now that Johnny is just going,  
Though Betty's in a mighty flurry,  
She gently pats the Pony's side,  
On which her Idiot Boy must ride,  
And seems no longer in a hurry.

But when the Pony moved his legs,  
Oh ! then for the poor Idiot Boy !  
For joy he cannot hold the bridle,  
For joy his head and heels are idle,  
He's idle all for very joy.

And while the Pony moves his legs,  
In Johnny's left hand you may see  
The green bough motionless and dead :  
The Moon that shines above his head  
Is not more still and mute than he.

His heart it was so full of glee,  
That till full fifty yards were gone,  
He quite forgot his holly whip,  
And all his skill in horsemanship :  
Oh ! happy, happy, happy John.

And while the Mother, at the door,  
Stands fixed, her face with joy o'erflows,  
Proud of herself, and proud of him,  
She sees him in his travelling trim,  
How quietly her Johnny goes.

The silence of her Idiot Boy,  
What hopes it sends to Betty's heart !  
He's at the guide-post—he turns right ;  
She watches till he's out of sight,  
And Betty will not then depart.

Burr, burr—now Johnny's lips they burr,  
As loud as any mill, or near it ;  
Meek as a lamb the Pony moves,  
And Johnny makes the noise he loves,  
And Betty listens, glad to hear it.

Away she hies to Susan Gale :  
Her Messenger's in merry tune ;  
The owlets hoot, the owlets curr,  
And Johnny's lips they burr, burr, burr,  
As on he goes beneath the moon.

His steed and he right well agree ;  
For of this Pony there's a rumour,  
That, should he lose his eyes and ears,  
And should he live a thousand years,  
He never will be out of humour.

But then he is a horse that thinks !  
And when he thinks, his pace is slack ;  
Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,  
Yet, for his life, he cannot tell  
What he has got upon his back.

So through the moonlight lanes they go,  
And far into the moonlight dale,  
And by the church, and o'er the down,  
To bring a Doctor from the town,  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And Betty, now at Susan's side,  
Is in the middle of her story,  
What speedy help her Boy will bring,  
With many a most diverting thing,  
Of Johnny's wit, and Johnny's glory.

And Betty, still at Susan's side,  
By this time is not quite so flurried :  
Demure with porringer and plate  
She sits, as if in Susan's fate  
Her life and soul were buried.

But Betty, poor good woman ! she,  
You plainly in her face may read it,  
Could lend out of that moment's store  
Five years of happiness or more  
To any that might need it.

But yet I guess that now and then  
With Betty all was not so well ;  
And to the road she turns her ears,  
And thence full many a sound she hears,  
Which she to Susan will not tell.

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;  
"As sure as there's a moon in heaven,"  
Cries Betty, "he'll be back again ;  
They'll both be here—'tis almost ten—  
Both will be here before eleven."

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;  
The clock gives warning for eleven ;  
"Tis on the stroke—"He must be near,"  
Quoth Betty, "and will soon be here,  
As sure as there's a moon in heaven."

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,  
And Johnny is not yet in sight :  
—The Moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,  
But Betty is not quite at ease ;  
And Susan has a dreadful night.

And Betty, half an hour ago,  
On Johnny vile reflections cast :

"A little idle sauntering Thing!"  
With other names, an endless string;  
But now that time is gone and past.

And Betty's drooping at the heart,  
That happy time all past and gone,  
"How can it be he is so late?  
The Doctor, he has made him wait;  
Susan! they'll both be here anon."

And Susan's growing worse and worse,  
And Betty's in a sad *quandary*;  
And then there's nobody to say  
If she must go, or she must stay!  
—She's in a sad *quandary*.

The clock is on the stroke of one;  
But neither Doctor nor his Guide  
Appears along the moonlight road;  
There's neither horse nor man abroad,  
And Betty's still at Susan's side.

And Susan now begins to fear  
Of sad mischances not a few,  
That Johnny may perhaps be drowned;  
Or lost, perhaps, and never found;  
Which they must both for ever rue.

She prefaced half a hint of this  
With, "God forbid it should be true!"  
At the first word that Susan said  
Cried Betty, rising from the bed,  
"Susan, I'd gladly stay with you."

"I must be gone, I must away;  
Consider, Johnny's but half-wise;  
Susan, we must take care of him,  
If he is hurt in life or limb"—  
"Oh God forbid!" poor Susan cries.

"What can I do?" says Betty, going,  
"What can I do to ease your pain?  
Good Susan tell me, and I'll stay;  
I fear you're in a dreadful way,  
But I shall soon be back again."

"Nay, Betty, go! good Betty, go!  
There's nothing that can ease my pain."  
Then off she hies; but with a prayer  
That God poor Susan's life would spare,  
Till she comes back again.

So, through the moonlight lane she goes,  
And far into the moonlight dale;  
And how she ran, and how she walked,  
And all that to herself she talked,  
Would surely be a tedious tale.

In high and low, above, below,  
In great and small, in round and square,  
In tree and tower was Johnny seen,  
In bush and brake, in black and green;  
'Twas Johnny, Johnny, every where.

And while she crossed the bridge, there came  
A thought with which her heart is sore—  
Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,  
'To hunt the moon within the brook,  
And never will be heard of more.

Now is she high upon the down,  
Alone amid a prospect wide;  
There's neither Johnny nor his Horse  
Among the fern or in the gorse;  
There's neither Doctor nor his Guide.

"O saints! what is become of him?  
Perhaps he's climbed into an oak,  
Where he will stay till he is dead;  
Or, sadly he has been misled,  
And joined the wandering gipsy-folk.

"Or him that wicked Pony's carried  
To the dark cave, the goblin's hall;  
Or in the castle he's pursuing  
Among the ghosts his own undoing;  
Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she sailed,  
While to the town she posts away;  
"If Susan had not been so ill,  
Alas! I should have had him still,  
My Johnny, till my dying day."

Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,  
The Doctor's self could hardly spare:  
Unworthy things she talked, and wild;  
Even he, of cattle the most mild,  
The Pony had his share.

But now she's fairly in the town,  
And to the Doctor's door she hies;  
'Tis silence all on every side;  
The town so long, the town so wide,  
Is silent as the skies.

And now she's at the Doctor's door,  
She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap;  
The Doctor at the casement shows  
His glimmering eyes that peep and doze!  
And one hand rubs his old night-cap.

"O Doctor! Doctor! where's my Johnny?"  
"I'm here, what is't you want with me?"

"O Sir! you know I'm Betty Foy,  
And I have lost my poor dear Boy,  
You know him—him you often see;

"He's not so wise as some folks be :"  
"The devil take his wisdom!" said  
The Doctor, looking somewhat grim,  
"What, Woman! should I know of him?"  
And, grumbling, he went back to bed!

"O woe is me! O woe is me!  
Here will I die; here will I die;  
I thought to find my lost one here,  
But he is neither far nor near,  
Oh! what a wretched Mother I!"

She stops, she stands, she looks about;  
Which way to turn she cannot tell.  
Poor Betty! it would ease her pain  
If she had heart to knock again;  
—The clock strikes three—a dismal knell!

Then up along the town she hies,  
No wonder if her senses fail;  
This piteous news so much it shocked her,  
She quite forgot to send the Doctor,  
To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And now she's high upon the down,  
And she can see a mile of road:  
"O cruel! I'm almost threescore;  
Such night as this was ne'er before,  
There's not a single soul abroad."

She listens, but she cannot hear  
The foot of horse, the voice of man;  
The streams with softest sound are flowing,  
The grass you almost hear it growing,  
You hear it now, if e'er you can.

The owlets through the long blue night  
Are shouting to each other still:  
Fond lovers! yet not quite hob nob,  
They lengthen out the tremulous sob,  
That echoes far from hill to hill.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,  
Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin,  
A green-grown pond she just has past,  
And from the brink she hurries fast,  
Lest she should drown herself therein.

And now she sits her down and weeps;  
Such tears she never shed before;  
"Oh dear, dear Pony! my sweet joy!  
Oh carry back my Idiot Boy!  
And we will ne'er o'erload thee more."

A thought is come into her head:  
The Pony he is mild and good,  
And we have always used him well;  
Perhaps he's gone along the dell,  
And carried Johnny to the wood.

Then up she springs as if on wings;  
She thinks no more of deadly sin;  
If Betty fifty ponds should see,  
The last of all her thoughts would be  
To drown herself therein.

O Reader! now that I might tell  
What Johnny and his Horse are doing  
What they've been doing all this time,  
Oh could I put it into rhyme,  
A most delightful tale pursuing!

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought!  
He with his Pony now doth roam  
The cliffs and peaks so high that are,  
To lay his hands upon a star,  
And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turned himself about,  
His face unto his horse's tail,  
And, still and mute, in wonder lost,  
All silent as a horseman-ghost,  
He travels slowly down the vale.

And now, perhaps, is hunting sheep,  
A fierce and dreadful hunter he;  
Yon valley, now so trim and green,  
In five months' time, should he be seen,  
A desert wilderness will be!

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,  
And like the very soul of evil,  
He's galloping away, away,  
And so will gallop on for aye,  
The bane of all that dread the devil!

I to the Muses have been bound  
These fourteen years, by strong indentures:  
O gentle Muses! let me tell  
But half of what to him befell;  
He surely met with strange adventures.

O gentle Muses! is this kind?  
Why will ye thus my suit repel?  
Why of your further aid bereave me?  
And can ye thus unfriended leave me  
Ye Muses! whom I love so well?

Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,  
Which thunders down with headlong force,



Beneath the moon, yet shining fair,  
As careless as if nothing were,  
Sits upright on a feeding horse?

Unto his horse—there feeding free,  
He seems, I think, the rein to give ;  
Of moon or stars he takes no heed ;  
Of such we in romances read :  
—'Tis Johnny ! Johnny ! as I live.

And that's the very Pony, too !  
Where is she, where is Betty Foy ?  
She hardly can sustain her fears ;  
The roaring waterfall she hears,  
And cannot find her Idiot Boy.

Your Pony's worth his weight in gold :  
Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy !  
She's coming from among the trees,  
And now all full in view she sees  
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And Betty sees the Pony too :  
Why stand you thus, good Betty Foy ?  
It is no goblin, 'tis no ghost,  
'Tis he whom you so long have lost,  
He whom you love, your Idiot Boy.

She looks again—her arms are up—  
She screams—she cannot move for joy ;  
She darts, as with a torrent's force,  
She almost has o'turned the Horse,  
And fast she holds her Idiot Boy.

And Johnny burrs, and laughs aloud ;  
Whether in cunning or in joy  
I cannot tell ; but while he laughs,  
Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs  
To hear again her Idiot Boy.

And now she's at the Pony's tail,  
And now is at the Pony's head,—  
On that side now, and now on this ;  
And, almost stifled with her bliss,  
A few sad tears does Betty shed.

She kisses o'er and o'er again  
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy ;  
She's happy here, is happy there,  
She is uneasy every where ;  
Her limbs are all alive with joy.

She pats the Pony, where or when  
She knows not, happy Betty Foy !  
The little Pony glad may be,  
But he is milder far than she,  
You hardly can perceive his joy.

" Oh ! Johnny, never mind the Doctor ;  
You've done your best, and that is all : "  
She took the reins, when this was said,  
And gently turned the Pony's head  
From the loud waterfall.

By this the stars were almost gone,  
The moon was setting on the hill,  
So pale you scarcely looked at her :  
The little birds began to stir,  
Though yet their tongues were still.

The Pony, Betty, and her Boy,  
Wind slowly through the woody dale ;  
And who is she, betimes abroad,  
That hobbles up the steep rough road ?  
Who is it, but old Susan Gale ?

Long time lay Susan lost in thought ;  
And many dreadful fears beset her,  
Both for her Messenger and Nurse ;  
And, as her mind grew worse and worse,  
Her body—it grew better.

She turned, she tossed herself in bed,  
On all sides doubts and terrors met her ;  
Point after point did she discuss ;  
And, while her mind was fighting thus,  
Her body still grew better.

" Alas ! what is become of them ?  
These fears can never be endured ;  
I'll to the wood."—The word scarce said,  
Did Susan rise up from her bed,  
As if by magic cured.

Away she goes up hill and down,  
And to the wood at length is come ;  
She spies her Friends, she shouts a greet-  
ing ;  
Oh me ! it is a merry meeting  
As ever was in Christendom.

The owls have hardly sung their last,  
While our four travellers homeward wend ;  
The owls have hooted all night long,  
And with the owls began my song,  
And with the owls must end.

For while they all were travelling home,  
Cried Betty, " Tell us, Johnny, do,  
Where all this long night you have been,  
What you have heard, what you have  
seen :  
And, Johnny, mind you tell us true."

Now Johnny all night long had heard  
The owls in tuneful concert strive ;  
No doubt too he the moon had seen ;  
For in the moonlight he had been  
From eight o'clock till five.

And thus, to Betty's question, he  
Made answer, like a traveller bold,  
(His very words I give to you.)  
"The cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,  
And the sun did shine so cold !"  
—Thus answered Johnny in his glory,  
And that was all his travel's story.

1798.

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN  
ABBEY, ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF  
THE WYE DURING A TOUR. JULY 13,  
1798

No poem of mine was composed under circum-  
stances more pleasant for me to remember than  
this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after  
crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was  
entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of  
four or five days, with my Sister. Not a line of  
it was altered, and not any part of it written down  
till I reached Bristol. It was published almost  
immediately after in the little volume of which so  
much has been said in these Notes.—(The Lyrical  
Ballads, as first published at Bristol by  
Cottle.)

FIVE years have past ; five summers, with  
the length

Of five long winters ! and again I hear  
These waters, rolling from their mountain-  
springs

With a soft inland murmur.<sup>1</sup>—Once again  
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,  
That on a wild secluded scene impress  
Thoughts of more deep seclusion ; and  
connect

The landscape with the quiet of the sky.  
The day is come when I again repose  
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view  
These plots of cottage-ground, these  
orchard-tufts,

Which at this season, with their unripe  
fruits,

<sup>1</sup> The river is not affected by the tides a few  
miles above Tintern.

Are clad in one green hue, and lose them-  
selves

'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see  
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little  
lines

Of sportive wood run wild : these pastoral  
farms,

Green to the very door ; and wreaths of  
smoke

Sent up, in silence, from among the trees !  
With some uncertain notice, as might seem  
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,  
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his  
fire

The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,  
Through a long absence, have not been to  
me

As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :  
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din  
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them  
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,  
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;  
And passing even into my purer mind,  
With tranquil restoration :—feelings too  
Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,  
As have no slight or trivial influence  
On that best portion of a good man's life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts  
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,  
To them I may have owed another gift,  
Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed  
mood,

In which the burthen of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world,  
Is lightened :—that serene and blessed  
mood,

In which the affections gently lead us  
on,—

Until, the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul :  
While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

If this  
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft—  
In darkness and amid the many shapes  
Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir  
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,  
Have hung upon the beatings of my  
heart—

How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,  
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the  
woods,

How often has my spirit turned to thee!  
And now, with gleams of half-extin-  
guished thought,

With many recognitions dim and faint,  
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,  
The picture of the mind revives again:  
While here I stand, not only with the sense  
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing  
thoughts

That in this moment there is life and food  
For future years. And so I dare to hope,  
Though changed, no doubt, from what I  
was when first

I came among these hills; when like a roe  
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides  
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,  
Wherever nature led: more like a man  
Flying from something that he dreads, than  
one

Who sought the thing he loved. For  
nature then

(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,  
And their glad animal movements all gone  
by)

To me was all in all.—I cannot paint  
What then I was. The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy  
wood,

Their colours and their forms, were then to  
me

An appetite; a feeling and a love,  
That had no need of a remoter charm,  
By thought supplied, nor any interest  
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is  
past,

And all its aching joys are now no more,  
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this  
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other  
gifts

Have followed; for such loss, I would  
believe,

Abundant recompence. For I have learned  
To look on nature, not as in the hour  
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often-  
times

The still, sad music of humanity,  
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample  
power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy

Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things. Therefore  
am I still

A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
And mountains; and of all that we behold  
From this green earth; of all the mighty  
world

Of eye, and ear,—both what they half  
create,<sup>1</sup>

And what perceive; well pleased to recognise  
In nature and the language of the sense,  
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the  
nurse,

The guide, the guardian of my heart, and  
soul

Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,  
If I were not thus taught, should I the  
more

Suffer my genial spirits to decay:  
For thou art with me here upon the banks  
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,  
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I  
catch

The language of my former heart, and  
read

My former pleasures in the shooting lights  
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while  
May I behold in thee what I was once,  
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I  
make,

Knowing that Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to  
lead

From joy to joy: for she can so inform  
The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil  
tongues,

Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish  
men,

Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb

<sup>1</sup> This line has a close resemblance to an admir-  
able line of Young's, the exact expression of which  
I do not recollect.

Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold  
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon  
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;  
And let the misty mountain-winds be free  
To blow against thee : and, in after years,  
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured  
Into a sober pleasure ; when thy mind  
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,  
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place  
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh !  
then,

If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,  
Should be thy portion, with what healing  
thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,  
And these my exhortations ! Nor, per-  
chance—

If I should be where I no more can hear  
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes  
these gleams

Of past existence—wilt thou then forget  
That on the banks of this delightful stream  
We stood together ; and that I, so long  
A worshipper of Nature, hither came  
Unwearied in that service : rather say  
With warmer love—oh ! with far deeper  
zeal

Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,  
That after many wanderings, many years  
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty  
cliffs,

And this green pastoral landscape, were to  
me

More dear, both for themselves and for thy  
sake ! 1798.

### THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR

Observed, and with great benefit to my own  
heart, when I was a child : written at Racedown  
and Alfoxden in my twenty-third year. The  
political economists were about that time begin-  
ning their war upon mendicity in all its forms,  
and by implication, if not directly, on alms-giving  
also. This heartless process has been carried as  
far as it can go by the AMENDED poor-law bill,  
though the inhumanity that prevails in this  
measure is somewhat disguised by the profession  
that one of its objects is to throw the poor  
upon the voluntary donations of their neighbours ;  
that is, if rightly interpreted, to force them into  
a condition between relief in the Union poor-  
house, and alms robbed of their Christian grace  
and spirit, as being *forced* rather from the bene-

volent than given by them ; while the avaricious  
and selfish, and all in fact but the humane and  
charitable, are at liberty to keep all they possess  
from their distressed brethren.

The class of Beggars, to which the Old Man  
here described belongs, will probably soon be  
extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old  
and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a  
stated round in their neighbourhood, and had  
certain fixed days, on which, at different houses,  
they regularly received alms, sometimes in money,  
but mostly in provisions.

I SAW an aged Beggar in my walk ;  
And he was seated, by the highway side,  
On a low structure of rude masonry  
Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they  
Who lead their horses down the steep  
rough road

May thence remount at ease. The aged  
Man

Had placed his staff across the broad  
smooth stone

That overlays the pile ; and, from a bag  
All white with flour, the dole of village  
dames,

He drew his scraps and fragments, one by  
one ;

And scanned them with a fixed and serious  
look

Of idle computation. In the sun,  
Upon the second step of that small pile,  
Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,  
He sat, and ate his food in solitude ;

And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,  
That, still attempting to prevent the waste,  
Was baffled still, the crumbs in little  
showers

Fell on the ground ; and the small moun-  
tain birds,

Not venturing yet to peck their destined  
meal,

Approached within the length of half his  
staff.

Him from my childhood have I known ;  
and then

He was so old, he seems not older now ;  
He travels on, a solitary Man,  
So helpless in appearance, that for him  
The sauntering Horseman throws not with  
a slack

And careless hand his alms upon the  
ground,

But stops,—that he may safely lodge the  
coin

Within the old Man's hat ; nor quits him  
 so,  
 But still, when he has given his horse the  
 rein,  
 Watches the aged Beggar with a look  
 Sidelong, and half-reverted. She who  
 tends  
 The toll-gate, when in summer at her door  
 She turns her wheel, if on the road she  
 sees  
 The aged beggar coming, quits her work,  
 And lifts the latch for him that he may  
 pass.  
 The post-boy, when his rattling wheels  
 o'ertake  
 The aged Beggar in the woody lane,  
 Shouts to him from behind ; and if, thus  
 warned,  
 The old man does not change his course,  
 the boy  
 Turns with less noisy wheels to the road-  
 side,  
 And passes gently by, without a curse  
 Upon his lips, or anger at his heart.  
 He travels on, a solitary Man ;  
 His age has no companion. On the  
 ground  
 His eyes are turned, and, as he moves  
 along,  
*They* move along the ground ; and, ever-  
 more,  
 Instead of common and habitual sight  
 Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale,  
 And the blue sky, one little span of earth  
 Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to  
 day,  
 Bow-bent, his eyes for ever on the ground,  
 He plies his weary journey ; seeing still,  
 And seldom knowing that he sees, some  
 straw,  
 Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in  
 one track,  
 The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left  
 Impressed on the white road,—in the same  
 line,  
 At distance still the same. Poor Traveller !  
 His staff trails with him ; scarcely do his  
 feet  
 Disturb the summer dust ; he is so still  
 In look and motion, that the cottage curs,  
 Ere he has passed the door, will turn away,  
 Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,  
 The vacant and the busy, maids and  
 youths,

And urchins newly breeched—all pass him  
 by :  
 Him even the slow-paced waggon leaves  
 behind.  
 But deem not this Man useless.—States-  
 men ! ye  
 Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye  
 Who have a broom still ready in your  
 hands  
 To rid the world of nuisances ; ye proud,  
 Heart-swoln, while in your pride ye con-  
 template  
 Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him  
 not  
 A burthen of the earth ! 'Tis Nature's  
 law  
 That none, the meanest of created things,  
 Or forms created the most vile and brute,  
 The dullest or most noxious, should exist  
 Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of  
 good,  
 A life and soul, to every mode of being  
 Inseparably linked. Then be assured  
 That least of all can aught—that ever  
 owned  
 The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime  
 Which man is born to—sink, howe'er  
 depressed,  
 So low as to be scorned without a sin ;  
 Without offence to God cast out of view ;  
 Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower  
 Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement  
 Worn out and worthless. While from  
 door to door,  
 This old Man creeps, the villagers in him  
 Behold a record which together binds  
 Past deeds and offices of charity,  
 Else unremembered, and so keeps alive  
 The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of  
 years,  
 And that half-wisdom half-experience gives,  
 Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign  
 To selfishness and cold oblivious cares.  
 Among the farms and solitary huts,  
 Hamlets and thinly-scattered villages,  
 Where'er the aged Beggar takes his rounds,  
 The mild necessity of use compels  
 To acts of love ; and habit does the work  
 Of reason ; yet prepares that after-joy  
 Which reason cherishes. And thus the  
 soul,  
 By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,  
 Doth find herself insensibly disposed  
 To virtue and true goodness.

Some there are,  
By their good works exalted, lofty minds  
And meditative, authors of delight  
And happiness, which to the end of time  
Will live, and spread, and kindle: even  
such minds

In childhood, from this solitary Being,  
Or from like wanderer, haply have received  
(A thing more precious far than all that  
books

Or the solitudes of love can do !)  
That first mild touch of sympathy and  
thought,

In which they found their kindred with a  
world

Where want and sorrow were. The easy  
man

Who sits at his own door,—and, like the  
pear

That overhangs his head from the green  
wall,

Feeds in the sunshine; the robust and  
young,

The prosperous and unthinking, they who  
live

Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove  
Of their own kindred;—all behold in him  
A silent monitor, which on their minds  
Must needs impress a transitory thought  
Of self-congratulation, to the heart  
Of each recalling his peculiar boons,  
His charters and exemptions; and, per-  
chance,

Though he to no one give the fortitude  
And circumspection needful to preserve  
His present blessings, and to husband up  
The respite of the season, he, at least,  
And 'tis no vulgar service, makes them  
felt.

Yet further.—Many, I believe, there  
are

Who live a life of virtuous decency,  
Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel  
No self-reproach; who of the moral law  
Established in the land where they abide  
Are strict observers; and not negligent  
In acts of love to those with whom they  
dwell,

Their kindred, and the children of their  
blood.

Praise be to such, and to their slumbers  
peace!

—But of the poor man ask, the abject  
poor;

Go, and demand of him, if there be here  
In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,  
And these inevitable charities,  
Wherewith to satisfy the human soul?  
No—man is dear to man; the poorest  
poor

Long for some moments in a weary life  
When they can know and feel that they  
have been,

Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-  
out

Of some small blessings; have been kind  
to such

As needed kindness, for this single cause,  
That we have all of us one human heart.

—Such pleasure is to one kind Being  
known,

My neighbour, when with punctual care,  
each week

Duly as Friday comes, though pressed  
herself

By her own wants, she from her store of  
meal

Takes one unsparing handful for the  
scrip

Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door  
Returning with exhilarated heart,  
Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in  
heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his  
head!

And while in that vast solitude to which  
The tide of things has borne him, he  
appears

To breathe and live but for himself alone,  
Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about  
The good which the benignant law of  
Heaven

Has hung around him: and, while life is  
his,

Still let him prompt the unlettered villa-  
gers

To tender offices and pensive thoughts.

—Then let him pass, a blessing on his  
head!

And, long as he can wander, let him  
breathe

The freshness of the valleys; let his  
blood

Struggle with frosty air and winter snows;  
And let the chartered wind that sweeps the  
heath

Beat his grey locks against his withered  
face.

Reverence the hope whose vital anxious-  
ness

Gives the last human interest to his heart.  
May never HOUSE, misnamed of INDUSTRY,  
Make him a captive!—for that pent-up  
din,

Those life-consuming sounds that clog the  
air,

Be his the natural silence of old age!  
Let him be free of mountain solitudes;  
And have around him, whether heard or  
not,

The pleasant melody of woodland birds.  
Few are his pleasures: if his eyes have  
now

Been doomed so long to settle upon earth  
That not without some effort they behold  
The countenance of the horizontal sun,  
Rising or setting, let the light at least  
Find a free entrance to their languid orbs.  
And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit  
down

Beneath the trees, or on a grassy bank  
Of highway side, and with the little birds  
Share his chance-gathered meal; and,  
finally,

As in the eye of Nature he has lived,  
So in the eye of Nature let him die!

1798.

#### ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY

THE little hedgerow birds,  
That peck along the roads, regard him  
not.

He travels on, and in his face, his step,  
His gait, is one expression: every limb,  
His look and bending figure, all bespeak  
A man who does not move with pain, but  
moves

With thought.—He is insensibly subdued  
To settled quiet: he is one by whom  
All effort seems forgotten; one to whom  
Long patience hath such mild composure  
given,

That patience now doth seem a thing of  
which

He hath no need. He is by nature led  
To peace so perfect that the young behold  
With envy, what the Old Man hardly feels.

1798.

#### PETER BELL

##### A TALE

##### What's in a Name?

Brutus will start a Spirit as soon as Cæsar!

Written at Alfoxden. Founded upon an anecdote, which I read in a newspaper, of an ass being found hanging his head over a canal in a wretched posture. Upon examination a dead body was found in the water and proved to be the body of its master. The countenance, gait, and figure of Peter, were taken from a wild rover with whom I walked from Bulth, on the river Wye, downwards nearly as far as the town of Hay. He told me strange stories. It has always been a pleasure to me through life to catch at every opportunity that has occurred in my rambles of becoming acquainted with this class of people. The number of Peter's wives was taken from the trespasses in this way of a lawless creature who lived in the county of Durham, and used to be attended by many women, sometimes not less than half a dozen, as disorderly as himself. Benoni, or the child of sorrow, I knew when I was a school-boy. His mother had been deserted by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, she herself being a gentlewoman by birth. The circumstances of her story were told me by my dear old Dame, Anne Tyson, who was her confidante. The Lady died broken-hearted.—In the woods of Alfoxden I used to take great delight in noticing the habits, tricks, and physiognomy of asses; and I have no doubt that I was thus put upon writing the poem out of liking for the creature that is so often dreadfully abused.—The crescent-moon, which makes such a figure in the prologue, assumed this character one evening while I was watching its beauty in front of Alfoxden House. I intended this poem for the volume before spoken of, but it was not published for more than twenty years afterwards.—The worship of the Methodists or Ranters is often heard during the stillness of the summer evening in the country with affecting accompaniments of rural beauty. In both the psalmody and the voice of the preacher there is, not unfrequently, much solemnity likely to impress the feelings of the rudest characters under favourable circumstances.

TO

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., P.L., ETC. ETC.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The Tale of Peter Bell, which I now introduce to your notice, and to that of the Public,

has, in its Manuscript state, nearly survived its *minority* :—for it first saw the light in the summer of 1798. During this long interval, pains have been taken at different times to make the production less unworthy of a favourable reception ; or, rather, to fit it for filling *permanently* a station, however humble, in the Literature of our Country. This has, indeed, been the aim of all my endeavours in Poetry, which, you know, have been sufficiently laborious to prove that I deem the Art not lightly to be approached ; and that the attainment of excellence in it may laudably be made the principal object of intellectual pursuit by any man, who, with reasonable consideration of circumstances, has faith in his own impulses.

The Poem of Peter Bell, as the Prologue will show, was composed under a belief that the Imagination not only does not require for its exercise the intervention of supernatural agency, but that, though such agency be excluded, the faculty may be called forth as imperiously and for kindred results of pleasure, by incidents, within the compass of poetic probability, in the humblest departments of daily life. Since that Prologue was written, *you* have exhibited most splendid effects of judicious daring, in the opposite and usual course. Let this acknowledgment make my peace with the lovers of the supernatural ; and I am persuaded it will be admitted, that to you, as a Master in that province of the Art, the following Tale, whether from contrast or congruity, is not an inappropriate offering. Accept it, then, as a public testimony of affectionate admiration from one with whose name yours has been often coupled (to use your own words) for evil and for good ; and believe me to be, with earnest wishes that life and health may be granted you to complete the many important works in which you are engaged, and with high respect,

Most faithfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

*Rydal Mount, April 7, 1819.*

#### PROLOGUE

THERE's something in a flying horse,  
There's something in a huge balloon ;  
But through the clouds I'll never float  
Until I have a little Boat,  
Shaped like the crescent-moon.

And now I *have* a little Boat,  
In shape a very crescent-moon  
Fast through the clouds my boat can sail ;  
But if perchance your faith should fail,  
Look up—and you shall see me soon !

The woods, my Friends, are round you  
roaring,  
Rocking and roaring like a sea ;  
The noise of danger's in your ears,  
And ye have all a thousand fears  
Both for my little Boat and me !

Meanwhile untroubled I admire  
The pointed horns of my canoe ;  
And, did not pity touch my breast,  
To see how ye are all distrest,  
Till my ribs ached, I'd laugh at you !

Away we go, my Boat and I—  
Frail man ne'er sate in such another ;  
Whether among the winds we strive,  
Or deep into the clouds we dive,  
Each is contented with the other.

Away we go—and what care we  
For treasons, tumults, and for wars ?  
We are as calm in our delight  
As is the crescent-moon so bright  
Among the scattered stars.

Up goes my Boat among the stars  
Through many a breathless field of light,  
Through many a long blue field of ether,  
Leaving ten thousand stars beneath her :  
Up goes my little Boat so bright !

The Crab, the Scorpion, and the Bull—  
We pry among them all ; have shot  
High o'er the red-haired race of Mars,  
Covered from top to toe with scars ;  
Such company I like it not !

The towns in Saturn are decayed,  
And melancholy Spectres throng them ;—  
The Pleiads, that appear to kiss  
Each other in the vast abyss,  
With joy I sail among them.

Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,  
Great Jove is full of stately bowers ;  
But these, and all that they contain,  
What are they to that tiny grain,  
That little Earth of ours ?

Then back to Earth, the dear green  
Earth :—  
Whole ages if I here should roam,  
The world for my remarks and me  
Would not a whit the better be ;  
I've left my heart at home.



See ! there she is, the matchless Earth !  
 There spreads the famed Pacific Ocean !  
 Old Andes thrusts yon craggy spear  
 Through the grey clouds ; the Alps are  
                   here,  
 Like waters in commotion !

Yon tawny slip is Libya's sands ;  
 That silver thread the river Dnieper !  
 And look, where clothed in brightest green  
 Is a sweet Isle, of isles the Queen ;  
 Ye fairies, from all evil keep her !

And see the town where I was born !  
 Around those happy fields we span  
 In boyish gambols ;—I was lost  
 Where I have been, but on this coast  
 I feel I am a man.

Never did fifty things at once  
 Appear so lovely, never, never ;—  
 How tunelessly the forests ring !  
 To hear the earth's soft murmuring  
 Thus could I hang for ever !

" Shame on you ! " cried my little Boat,  
 " Was ever such a homesick Loon,  
 Within a living Boat to sit,  
 And make no better use of it ;  
 A Boat twin-sister of the crescent-moon !

" Ne'er in the breast of full-grown Poet  
 Fluttered so faint a heart before ;—  
 Was it the music of the spheres  
 That overpowered your mortal ears ?  
 —Such din shall trouble them no more.

" These nether precincts do not lack  
 Charms of their own ;—then come with me ;  
 I want a comrade, and for you  
 There's nothing that I would not do ;  
 Nought is there that you shall not see.

" Haste ! and above Siberian snows  
 We'll sport amid the boreal morning ;  
 Will mingle with her lustres gliding  
 Among the stars, the stars now hiding,  
 And now the stars adorning.

" I know the secrets of a land  
 Where human foot did never stray ;  
 Fair is that land as evening skies,  
 And cool, though in the depth it lies  
 Of burning Africa.

" Or we'll into the realm of Faery,  
 Among the lovely shades of things ;  
 The shadowy forms of mountains bare,  
 And streams, and bowers, and ladies fair,  
 The shades of palaces and kings !

" Or, if you thirst with hardy zeal  
 Less quiet regions to explore,  
 Prompt voyage shall to you reveal  
 How earth and heaven are taught to feel  
 The might of magic lore !"

" My little vagrant Form of light,  
 My gay and beautiful Canoe,  
 Well have you played your friendly part ;  
 As kindly take what from my heart  
 Experience forces—then adieu !

" Temptation lurks among your words ;  
 But, while these pleasures you're pursuing  
 Without impeding or let,  
 No wonder if you quite forget  
 What on the earth is doing.

" There was a time when all mankind  
 Did listen with a faith sincere  
 To tuneful tongues in mystery versed ;  
 Then Poets fearlessly rehearsed  
 The wonders of a wild career.

" Go—(but the world's a sleepy world,  
 And 'tis, I fear, an age too late)  
 Take with you some ambitious Youth !  
 For, restless Wanderer ! I, in truth,  
 Am all unfit to be your mate.

" Long have I loved what I behold,  
 The night that calms, the day that cheers ;  
 The common growth of mother-earth  
 Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,  
 Her humblest mirth and tears.

" The dragon's wing, the magic ring,  
 I shall not covet for my dower,  
 If I along that lowly way  
 With sympathetic heart may stray,  
 And with a soul of power.

" These given, what more need I desire  
 To stir, to soothe, or elevate ?  
 What nobler marvels than the mind  
 May in life's daily prospect find,  
 May find or there create ?

"A potent wand doth Sorrow wield ;  
What spell so strong as guilty Fear !  
Repentance is a tender Sprite ;  
If aught on earth have heavenly might,  
'Tis lodged within her silent tear.

"But grant my wishes,—let us now  
Descend from this ethereal height ;  
Then take thy way, adventurous Skiff,  
More daring far than Hippogriff,  
And be thy own delight !

"To the stone-table in my garden,  
Loved haunt of many a summer hour,  
The Squire is come : his daughter Bess  
Beside him in the cool recess  
Sits blooming like a flower.

"With these are many more convened ;  
They know not I have been so far ;—  
I see them there, in number nine,  
Beneath the spreading Weymouth-pine !  
I see them—there they are !

"There sits the Vicar and his Dame ;  
And there my good friend, Stephen Otter ;  
And, ere the light of evening fail,  
To them I must relate the Tale  
Of Peter Bell the Potter."

Off flew the Boat—away she flees,  
Spurning her freight with indignation !  
And I, as well as I was able,  
On two poor legs, toward my stone-table  
Limped on with sore vexation.

"O, here he is !" cried little Bess—  
She saw me at the garden-door ;  
"We've waited anxiously and long,"  
They cried, and all around me throng,  
Full nine of them or more !

"Reproach me not—your fears be still—  
Be thankful we again have met ;—  
Resume, my Friends ! within the shade  
Your seats, and quickly shall be paid  
The well-remembered debt."

I spake with faltering voice, like one  
Not wholly rescued from the pale  
Of a wild dream, or worse illusion ;  
But, straight, to cover my confusion,  
Began the promised Tale.

## PART FIRST

ALL by the moonlight river side  
Groaned the poor Beast—alas ! in vain ;  
The staff was raised to loftier height,  
And the blows fell with heavier weight  
As Peter struck—and struck again.

"Hold !" cried the Squire, "against the  
rules  
Of common sense you're surely sinning ;  
This leap is for us all too bold ;  
Who Peter was, let that be told,  
And start from the beginning."

—"A Potter,<sup>1</sup> Sir, he was by trade,"  
Said I, becoming quite collected ;  
"And wheresoever he appeared,  
Full twenty times was Peter feared  
For once that Peter was respected.

"He, two-and-thirty years or more,  
Had been a wild and woodland rover ;  
Had heard the Atlantic surges roar  
On farthest Cornwall's rocky shore,  
And trod the cliffs of Dover.

"And he had seen Caernarvon's towers,  
And well he knew the spire of Sarum ;  
And he had been where Lincoln bell  
Flings o'er the fen that ponderous knell—  
A far-renowned alarum !

"At Doncaster, at York, and Leeds,  
And merry Carlisle had he been ;  
And all along the Lowlands fair,  
All through the bonny shire of Ayr  
And far as Aberdeen.

"And he had been at Inverness ;  
And Peter, by the mountain-rills,  
Had danced his round with Highland  
lasses ;  
And he had lain beside his asses  
On lofty Cheviot Hills :

"And he had trudged through Yorkshire  
dales,  
Among the rocks and winding *scars* ;  
Where deep and low the hamlets lie  
Beneath their little patch of sky  
And little lot of stars :

<sup>1</sup> In the dialect of the North, a hawker of  
earthenware is thus designated.

" And all along the indented coast,  
Bespattered with the salt-sea foam ;  
Where'er a knot of houses lay  
On headland, or in hollow bay ;—  
Sure never man like him did roam !

" As well might Peter, in the Fleet,  
Have been fast bound, a begging debtor ;—  
He travelled here, he travelled there ;—  
But not the value of a hair  
Was heart or head the better.

" He roved among the vales and streams,  
In the green wood and hollow dell ;  
They were his dwellings night and day,—  
But nature ne'er could find the way  
Into the heart of Peter Bell.

" In vain, through every changeful year,  
Did Nature lead him as before ;  
A primrose by a river's brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more.

" Small change it made on Peter's heart  
To see his gentle panniered train  
With more than vernal pleasure feeding,  
Where'er the tender grass was leading  
Its earliest green along the lane.

" In vain, through water, earth, and air,  
The soul of happy sound was spread,  
When Peter on some April morn,  
Beneath the broom or budding thorn,  
Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

" At noon, when, by the forest's edge  
He lay beneath the branches high,  
The soft blue sky did never melt  
Into his heart ; he never felt  
The witchery of the soft blue sky !

" On a fair prospect some have looked  
And felt, as I have heard them say,  
As if the moving time had been  
A thing as steadfast as the scene  
On which they gazed themselves away.

" Within the breast of Peter Bell  
These silent raptures found no place ;  
He was a Carl as wild and rude  
As ever hue-and-cry pursued,  
As ever ran a felon's race.

" Of all that lead a lawless life,  
Of all that love their lawless lives,  
In city or in village small,  
He was the wildest far of all ;—  
He had a dozen wedded wives.

" Nay, start not !—wedded wives—and  
twelve !  
But how one wife could e'er come near him,  
In simple truth I cannot tell ;  
For, be it said of Peter Bell,  
To see him was to fear him.

" Though Nature could not touch his heart  
By lovely forms, and silent weather,  
And tender sounds, yet you might see  
At once, that Peter Bell and she  
Had often been together.

" A savage wildness round him hung  
As of a dweller out of doors ;  
In his whole figure and his mien  
A savage character was seen  
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

" To all the unshaped half-human thoughts  
Which solitary Nature feeds  
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,  
Had Peter joined whatever vice  
The cruel city breeds.

" His face was keen as is the wind  
That cuts along the hawthorn-fence ;—  
Of courage you saw little there,  
But, in its stead, a medley air  
Of cunning and of impudence.

" He had a dark and sidelong walk,  
And long and slouching was his gait ;  
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,  
You might perceive, his spirit cold  
Was playing with some inward bait.

" His forehead wrinkled was and furred ;  
A work, one half of which was done  
By thinking of his '*whens*' and '*hows* ;'  
And half, by knitting of his brows  
Beneath the glaring sun.

" There was a hardness in his cheek,  
There was a hardness in his eye,  
As if the man had fixed his face,  
In many a solitary place,  
Against the wind and open sky !"

ONE NIGHT, (and now my little Bess !  
We've reached at last the promised Tale :)  
One beautiful November night,  
When the full moon was shining bright  
Upon the rapid river Swale,

Along the river's winding banks  
Peter was travelling all alone ;—  
Whether to buy or sell, or led  
By pleasure running in his head,  
To me was never known.

He trudged along through copse and brake,  
He trudged along o'er hill and dale ;  
Nor for the moon cared he a tittle,  
And for the stars he cared as little,  
And for the murmuring river Swale.

But, chancing to espy a path  
That promised to cut short the way  
As many a wiser man hath done,  
He left a trusty guide for one  
That might his steps betray.

To a thick wood he soon is brought  
Where cheerily his course he weaves,  
And whistling loud may yet be heard,  
Though often buried, like a bird  
Darkling, among the boughs and leaves.

But quickly Peter's mood is changed,  
And on he drives with cheeks that burn  
In downright fury and in wrath ;—  
There's little sign the treacherous path  
Will to the road return !

The path grows dim, and dimmer still ;  
Now up, now down, the Rover wends,  
With all the sail that he can carry,  
Till brought to a deserted quarry—  
And there the pathway ends.

He paused—for shadows of strange shape,  
Massy and black, before him lay ;  
But through the dark, and through the cold,  
And through the yawning fissures old,  
Did Peter boldly press his way

Right through the quarry ;—and behold  
A scene of soft and lovely hue !  
Where blue and grey, and tender green,  
Together make as sweet a scene  
As ever human eye did view.

Beneath the clear blue sky he saw  
A little field of meadow ground ;  
But field or meadow name it not ;  
Call it of earth a small green plot,  
With rocks encompassed round.

The Swale flowed under the grey rocks,  
But he flowed quiet and unseen ;—  
You need a strong and stormy gale  
To bring the noises of the Swale  
To that green spot, so calm and green !

And is there no one dwelling here,  
No hermit with his beads and glass ?  
And does no little cottage look  
Upon this soft and fertile nook ?  
Does no one live near this green grass ?

Across the deep and quiet spot  
Is Peter driving through the grass—  
And now has reached the skirting trees ;  
When, turning round his head, he sees  
A solitary Ass.

"A Prize !" cries Peter—but he first  
Must spy about him far and near :  
There's not a single house in sight,  
No woodman's hut, no cottage light—  
Peter, you need not fear !

There's nothing to be seen but woods,  
And rocks that spread a hoary gleam,  
And this one Beast, that from the bed  
Of the green meadow hangs his head  
Over the silent stream.

His head is with a halter bound ;  
The halter seizing, Peter leapt  
Upon the Creature's back, and plied  
With ready heels his shaggy side ;  
But still the Ass his station kept.

Then Peter gave a sudden jerk,  
A jerk that from a dungeon-floor  
Would have pulled up an iron ring ;  
But still the heavy-headed Thing  
Stood just as he had stood before !

Quoth Peter, leaping from his seat,  
"There is some plot against me laid ;"  
Once more the little meadow-ground  
And all the hoary cliffs around  
He cautiously surveyed.

All, all is silent—rocks and woods,  
All still and silent—far and near !  
Only the Ass, with motion dull,  
Upon the pivot of his skull  
Turns round his long left ear.

Thought Peter, What can mean all this ?  
Some ugly witchcraft must be here !  
—Once more the Ass, with motion dull,  
Upon the pivot of his skull  
Turned round his long left ear.

Suspicion ripened into dread ;  
Yet with deliberate action slow,  
His staff high-raising, in the pride  
Of skill, upon the sounding hide,  
He dealt a sturdy blow.

The poor Ass staggered with the shock ;  
And then, as if to take his ease,  
In quiet uncomplaining mood,  
Upon the spot where he had stood,  
Dropped gently down upon his knees :

As gently on his side he fell ;  
And by the river's brink did lie ;  
And, while he lay like one that mourned,  
The patient Beast on Peter turned  
His shining hazel eye.

'Twas but one mild, reproachful look,  
A look more tender than severe ;  
And straight in sorrow, not in dread,  
He turned the eye-ball in his head  
Towards the smooth river deep and clear.

Upon the Beast the sapling rings ;  
His lank sides heaved, his limbs they stirred ;  
He gave a groan, and then another,  
Of that which went before the brother,  
And then he gave a third.

All by the moonlight river side  
He gave three miserable groans ;  
And not till now hath Peter seen  
How gaunt the Creature is,—how lean  
And sharp his staring bones !

With legs stretched out and stiff he lay :—  
No word of kind commiseration  
Fell at the sight from Peter's tongue ;  
With hard contempt his heart was wrung,  
With hatred and vexation.

The meagre beast lay still as death ;  
And Peter's lips with fury quiver ;  
Quoth he, " You little mulish dog,  
I'll fling your carcase like a log  
Head-foremost down the river ! "

An impious oath confirmed the threat—  
Whereat from the earth on which he lay  
To all the echoes, south and north,  
And east and west, the Ass sent forth  
A long and clamorous bray !

This outcry, on the heart of Peter,  
Seems like a note of joy to strike,—  
Joy at the heart of Peter knocks ;  
But in the echo of the rocks  
Was something Peter did not like.

Whether to cheer his coward breast,  
Or that he could not break the chain,  
In this serene and solemn hour,  
Twined round him by demoniac power,  
To the blind work he turned again.

Among the rocks and winding crags ;  
Among the mountains far away ;  
Once more the ass did lengthen out  
More ruefully a deep-drawn shout,  
The hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray !

What is there now in Peter's heart !  
Or whence the might of this strange sound ?  
The moon uneasy looked and dimmer,  
The broad blue heavens appeared to glimmer,  
And the rocks staggered all around—

From Peter's hand the sapling dropped !  
Threat has he none to execute ;  
" If any one should come and see  
That I am here, they'll think," quoth he,  
" I'm helping this poor dying brute. "

He scans the Ass from limb to limb,  
And ventures now to uplift his eyes ;  
More steady looks the moon, and clear,  
More like themselves the rocks appear  
And touch more quiet skies.

His scorn returns—his hate revives ;  
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize  
With malice—that again takes flight ;  
For in the pool a startling sight  
Meets him, among the inverted trees.

Is it the moon's distorted face?  
The ghost-like image of a cloud?  
Is it a gallows there portrayed?  
Is Peter of himself afraid?  
Is it a coffin,—or a shroud?

A grisly idol hewn in stone?  
Or imp from witch's lap let fall?  
Perhaps a ring of shining fairies?  
Such as pursue their feared vagaries  
In a sylvan bower, or haunted hall?

Is it a fiend that to a stake  
Of fire his desperate self is tethering?  
Or stubborn spirit doomed to yell  
In solitary ward or cell,  
Ten thousand miles from all his brethren?

Never did pulse so quickly throb,  
And never heart so loudly panted;  
He looks, he cannot choose but look;  
Like some one reading in a book—  
A book that is enchanted.

Ah, well-a-day for Peter Bell!  
He will be turned to iron soon,  
Meet Statue for the court of Fear!  
His hat is up—and every hair  
Bristles, and whitens in the moon!

He looks, he ponders, looks again;  
He sees a motion—hears a groan;  
His eyes will burst—his heart will break—  
He gives a loud and frightful shriek,  
And back he falls, as if his life were flown!

#### PART SECOND

We left our Hero in a trance,  
Beneath the alders, near the river;  
The Ass is by the river-side,  
And, where the feeble breezes glide,  
Upon the stream the moonbeams quiver.

A happy respite! but at length  
He feels the glimmering of the moon;  
Wakes with glazed eye, and feebly sighing—  
To sink, perhaps, where he is lying,  
Into a second swoon!

He lifts his head, he sees his staff;  
He touches—'tis to him a treasure!  
Faint recollection seems to tell  
That he is yet where mortals dwell—  
A thought received with languid pleasure!

His head upon his elbow propped,  
Becoming less and less perplexed,  
Sky-ward he looks—to rock and wood—  
And then—upon the glassy flood  
His wandering eye is fixed.

Thought he, that is the face of one  
In his last sleep securely bound!  
So toward the stream his head he bent,  
And downward thrust his staff, intent  
The river's depth to sound.

*Now*—like a tempest-shattered bark,  
That overwhelmed and prostrate lies,  
And in a moment to the verge  
Is lifted of a foaming surge—  
Full suddenly the Ass doth rise!

His staring bones all shake with joy,  
And close by Peter's side he stands:  
While Peter o'er the river bends,  
The little Ass his neck extends,  
And fondly licks his hands.

Such life is in the Ass's eyes,  
Such life is in his limbs and ears;  
That Peter Bell, if he had been  
The veriest coward ever seen,  
Must now have thrown aside his fears.

The Ass looks on—and to his work  
Is Peter quietly resigned;  
He touches here—he touches there—  
And now among the dead man's hair  
His sapling Peter has entwined.

He pulls—and looks—and pulls again;  
And he whom the poor Ass had lost,  
The man who had been four days dead,  
Head-foremost from the river's bed  
Uprises like a ghost!

And Peter draws him to dry land;  
And through the brain of Peter pass  
Some poignant twitches, fast and faster;  
"No doubt," quoth he, "he is the Master  
Of this poor miserable Ass!"

The meagre Shadow that looks on—  
What would he now? what is he doing?  
His sudden fit of joy is flown,—  
He on his knees hath laid him down,  
As if he were his grief renewing;

But no—that Peter on his back  
Must mount, he shows well as he can :  
Thought Peter then, come weal or woe,  
I'll do what he would have me do,  
In pity to this poor drowned man.

With that resolve he boldly mounts  
Upon the pleased and thankful Ass ;  
And then, without a moment's stay,  
That earnest Creature turned away  
Leaving the body on the grass.

Intent upon his faithful watch,  
The Beast four days and nights had past ;  
A sweeter meadow ne'er was seen,  
And there the Ass four days had been,  
Nor ever once did break his fast :

Yet firm his step, and stout his heart ;  
The mead is crossed—the quarry's mouth  
Is reached ; but there the trusty guide  
Into a thicket turns aside,  
And deftly ambles towards the south.

When hark a burst of doleful sound !  
And Peter honestly might say,  
The like came never to his ears,  
Though he has been, full thirty years,  
A rover—night and day !

'Tis not a plover of the moors,  
'Tis not a bittern of the fen ;  
Nor can it be a barking fox,  
Nor night-bird chambered in the rocks,  
Nor wild-cat in a woody glen !

The Ass is startled—and stops short  
Right in the middle of the thicket ;  
And Peter, wont to whistle loud  
Whether alone or in a crowd,  
Is silent as a silent cricket.

What ails you now, my little Bess ?  
Well may you tremble and look grave !  
This cry—that rings along the wood,  
This cry—that floats adown the flood,  
Comes from the entrance of a cave :

I see a blooming Wood-boy there,  
And if I had the power to say  
How sorrowful the wanderer is,  
Your heart would be as sad as his  
Till you had kissed his tears away !

Grasping a hawthorn branch in hand,  
All bright with berries ripe and red,  
Into the cavern's mouth he peeps ;  
Thence back into the moonlight creeps ;  
Whom seeks he—whom?—the silent dead :

His father !—Him doth he require—  
Him bath he sought with fruitless pains,  
Among the rocks, behind the trees ;  
Now creeping on his hands and knees,  
Now running o'er the open plains.

And hither is he come at last,  
When he through such a day has gone,  
By this dark cave to be distrust  
Like a poor bird—her plundered nest  
Hovering around with dolorous moan !

Of that intense and piercing cry  
The listening Ass conjectures well ;  
Wild as it is, he there can read  
Some intermingled notes that plead  
With touches irresistible.

But Peter—when he saw the Ass  
Not only stop but turn, and change  
The cherished tenor of his pace  
That lamentable cry to chase—  
It wrought in him conviction strange ;

A faith that, for the dead man's sake  
And this poor slave who loved him well,  
Vengeance upon his head will fall,  
Some visitation worse than all  
Which ever till this night befell.

Meanwhile the Ass to reach his home,  
Is striving stoutly as he may ;  
But, while he climbs the woody hill,  
The cry grows weak—and weaker still ;  
And now at last it dies away.

So with his freight the Creature turns  
Into a gloomy grove of beech,  
Along the shade with footsteps true  
Descending slowly, till the two  
The open moonlight reach.

And there, along the narrow dell,  
A fair smooth pathway you discern,  
A length of green and open road—  
As if it from a fountain flowed—  
Winding away between the fern.

The rocks that tower on either side  
Build up a wild fantastic scene ;  
Temples like those among the Hindoos,  
And mosques, and spires, and abbey win-  
dows,  
And castles all with ivy green !

And, while the Ass pursues his way,  
Along this solitary dell,  
As pensively his steps advance,  
The mosques and spires change countenance  
And look at Peter Bell !

That unintelligible cry  
Hath left him high in preparation,—  
Convinced that he, or soon or late,  
This very night will meet his fate—  
And so he sits in expectation !

The strenuous Animal hath clomb  
With the green path ; and now he wends  
Where, shining like the smoothest sea,  
~~In~~ undisturbed immensity  
A level plain extends.

But whence this faintly-rustling sound  
By which the journeying pair are chased ?  
—A withered leaf is close behind,  
Light plaything for the sportive wind  
Upon that solitary waste.

When Peter spied the moving thing,  
It only doubled his distress ;  
“ Where there is not a bush or tree,  
The very leaves they follow me—  
So huge hath been my wickedness ! ”

To a close lane they now are come,  
Where, as before, the enduring Ass  
Moves on without a moment's stop,  
Nor once turns round his head to crop  
A bramble-leaf or blade of grass.

Between the hedges as they go,  
The white dust sleeps upon the lane ;  
And Peter, ever and anon  
Back-looking, sees, upon a stone,  
Or in the dust, a crimson stain.

A stain—as of a drop of blood  
By moonlight made more faint and wan ;  
Ha ! why these sinkings of despair ?  
He knows not how the blood comes there—  
And Peter is a wicked man.

At length he spies a bleeding wound,  
Where he had struck the Ass's head ;  
He sees the blood, knows what it is,—  
A glimpse of sudden joy was his,  
But then it quickly fled ;

Of him whom sudden death had seized  
He thought,—of thee, O faithful Ass !  
And once again those ghastly pains,  
Shoot to and fro through heart and reins,  
And through his brain like lightning pass.

### PART THIRD

I've heard of one, a gentle Soul,  
Though given to sadness and to gloom,  
And for the fact will vouch,—one night  
It chanced that by a taper's light  
This man was reading in his room ;

Bending, as you or I might bend  
At night o'er any pious book,  
When sudden blackness overspread  
The snow-white page on which he read,  
And made the good man round him look.

The chamber walls were dark all round,—  
And to his book he turned again ;  
—The light had left the lonely taper,  
And formed itself upon the paper  
Into large letters—bright and plain !

The godly book was in his hand—  
And, on the page, more black than coal,  
Appeared, set forth in strange array,  
A word—which to his dying day  
Perplexed the good man's gentle soul.

The ghostly word, thus plainly seen,  
Did never from his lips depart ;  
But he hath said, poor gentle wight !  
It brought full many a sin to light  
Out of the bottom of his heart.

Dread Spirits ! to confound the meek  
Why wander from your course so far,  
Disordering colour, form, and stature !  
—Let good men feel the soul of nature,  
And see things as they are.

Yet, potent Spirits ! well I know,  
How ye, that play with soul and sense,  
Are not unused to trouble friends  
Of goodness, for most gracious ends—  
And this I speak in reverence !



But might I give advice to you,  
Whom in my fear I love so well ;  
From men of pensive virtue go,  
Dread Beings ! and your empire show  
On hearts like that of Peter Bell.

Your presence often have I felt  
In darkness and the stormy night ;  
And, with like force, if need there be,  
Ye can put forth your agency  
When earth is calm, and heaven is bright.

Then, coming from the wayward world,  
That powerful world in which ye dwell,  
Come, Spirits of the Mind ! and try  
To-night, beneath the moonlight sky,  
What may be done with Peter Bell !

—O, would that some more skilful voice  
My further labour might prevent !  
Kind Listeners, that around me sit,  
I feel that I am all unfit  
For such high argument.

I've played, I've danced, with my narration ;  
I loitered long ere I began :  
Ye waited then on my good pleasure ;  
Pour out indulgence still, in measure  
As liberal as ye can !

Our Travellers, ye remember well,  
Are thridding a sequestered lane ;  
And Peter many tricks is trying,  
And many anodynes applying,  
To ease his conscience of its pain.

By this his heart is lighter far ;  
And, finding that he can account  
So snugly for that crimson stain,  
His evil spirit up again  
Does like an empty bucket mount.

And Peter is a deep logician  
Who hath no lack of wit mercurial ;  
" Blood drops—leaves rustle—yet," quoth  
he,  
" This poor man never, but for me,  
Could have had Christian burial.

" And, say the best you can, 'tis plain,  
That here has been some wicked dealing ;  
No doubt the devil in me wrought ;  
I'm not the man who could have thought  
An Ass like this was worth the stealing !"

So from his pocket Peter takes  
His shining horn tobacco-box ;  
And, in a light and careless way,  
As men who with their purpose play,  
Upon the lid he knocks.

Let them whose voice can stop the clouds,  
Whose cunning eye can see the wind,  
Tell to a curious world the cause  
Why, making here a sudden pause,  
The Ass turned round his head, and *griined*.

Appalling process ! I have marked  
The like on heath, in lonely wood ;  
And, verily, have seldom met  
A spectacle more hideous—yet  
It suited Peter's present mood.

And, grinning in his turn, his teeth  
He in jocose defiance showed—  
When, to upset his spiteful mirth,  
A murmur, pent within the earth,  
In the dead earth beneath the road

Rolled audibly ! it swept along,  
A muffled noise—a rumbling sound !—  
'Twas by a troop of miners made,  
Plying with gunpowder their trade,  
Some twenty fathoms under ground.

Small cause of dire effect ! for, surely,  
If ever mortal, King or Cotter,  
Believed that earth was charged to quake  
And yawn for his unworthy sake,  
'Twas Peter Bell the Potter.

But, as an oak in breathless air  
Will stand though to the centre hewn ;  
Or as the weakest things, if frost  
Have stiffened them, maintain their post ;  
So he, beneath the gazing moon !—

The Beast bestriding thus, he reached  
A spot where, in a sheltering cove,  
A little chapel stands alone,  
With greenest ivy overgrown,  
And tufted with an ivy grove ;

Dying insensibly away  
From human thoughts and purposes,  
It seemed—wall, window, roof and tower—  
To bow to some transforming power,  
And blend with the surrounding trees.

As ruinous a place it was,  
Thought Peter, in the shire of Fife  
That served my turn, when following still  
From land to land a reckless will  
I married my sixth wife !

The unheeding Ass moves slowly on,  
And now is passing by an inn  
Brim-full of a carousing crew,  
That make, with curses not a few,  
An uproar and a drunken din.

I cannot well express the thoughts  
Which Peter in those noises found ;—  
A stifling power compressed his frame,  
While-as a swimming darkness came  
Over that dull and dreary sound.

For well did Peter know the sound ;  
The language of those drunken joys  
To him, a jovial soul, I ween,  
But a few hours ago, had been  
A gladsome and a welcome noise.

*Now*, turned adrift into the past,  
He finds no solace in his course ;  
Like planet-stricken men of yore,  
He trembles, smitten to the core  
By strong compunction and remorse.

But, more than all, his heart is stung  
To think of one, almost a child ;  
A sweet and playful Highland girl,  
As light and beauteous as a squirrel,  
As beauteous and as wild !

Her dwelling was a lonely house,  
A cottage in a heathy dell ;  
And she put on her gown of green,  
And left her mother at sixteen,  
And followed Peter Bell.

But many good and pious thoughts  
Had she ; and, in the kirk to pray,  
Two long Scotch miles, through rain or  
snow  
To kirk she had been used to go,  
Twice every Sabbath-day.

And, when she followed Peter Bell,  
It was to lead an honest life ;  
For he, with tongue not used to falter,  
Had pledged his troth before the altar  
To love her as his wedded wife.

A mother's hope is hers ;—but soon  
She drooped and pined like one forlorn ;  
From Scripture she a name did borrow ;  
Benoni, or the child of sorrow,  
She called her babe unborn.

For she had learned how Peter lived,  
And took it in most grievous part ;  
She to the very bone was worn,  
And, ere that little child was born,  
Died of a broken heart.

And now the Spirits of the Mind  
Are busy with poor Peter Bell ;  
Upon the rights of visual sense  
Usurping, with a prevalence  
More terrible than magic spell.

Close by a brake of flowering furze  
(Above it shivering aspens play)  
He sees an unsubstantial creature,  
His very self in form and feature,  
Not four yards from the broad highway :

And stretched beneath the furze he sees  
The Highland girl—it is no other ;  
And hears her crying as she cried,  
The very moment that she died,  
“ My mother ! oh my mother ! ”

The sweat pours down from Peter's face,  
So grievous is his heart's contrition ;  
With agony his eye-balls ache  
While he beholds by the furze-brake  
This miserable vision !

Calm is the well-deserving brute,  
*His* peace hath no offence betrayed ;  
But now, while down that slope he wends,  
A voice to Peter's ear ascends,  
Resounding from the woody glade :

The voice, though clamorous as a horn  
Re-echoed by a naked rock,  
Comes from that tabernacle—List !  
Within, a fervent Methodist  
Is preaching to no heedless flock !

“ Repent ! repent ! ” he cries aloud,  
“ While yet ye may find mercy ;—strive  
To love the Lord with all your might ;  
Turn to him, seek him day and night,  
And save your souls alive !

"Repent ! repent ! though ye have gone,  
Through paths of wickedness and woe,  
After the Babylonian harlot ;  
And, though your sins be red as scarlet,  
They shall be white as snow !"

Even as he passed the door, these words  
Did plainly come to Peter's ears ;  
And they such joyful tidings were,  
The joy was more than he could bear !—  
He melted into tears.

Sweet tears of hope and tenderness !  
And fast they fell, a plenteous shower !  
His nerves, his sinews seemed to melt ;  
Through all his iron frame was felt  
A gentle, a relaxing, power !

Each fibre of his frame was weak ;  
Weak all the animal within ;  
But, in its helplessness, grew mild  
And gentle as an infant child,  
An infant that has known no sin.

'Tis said, meek Beast ! that, through  
Heaven's grace,  
He not unmoved did notice now  
The cross upon thy shoulder scored,  
For lasting impress, by the Lord  
To whom all human-kinds shall bow ;

Memorial of his touch—that day  
When Jesus humbly deigned to ride,  
Entering the proud Jerusalem,  
By an immeasurable stream  
Of shouting people deified !

Meanwhile the persevering Ass,  
Turned towards a gate that hung in view  
Across a shady lane ; his chest  
Against the yielding gate he pressed  
And quietly passed through.

And up the stony lane he goes ;  
No ghost more softly ever trod ;  
Among the stones and pebbles, he  
Sets down his hoofs inaudibly,  
As if with felt his hoofs were shod.

Along the lane the trusty Ass  
Went twice two hundred yards or more,  
And no one could have guessed his aim,—  
Till to a lonely house he came,  
And stopped beside the door.

Thought Peter, 'tis the poor man's home !  
He listens—not a sound is heard  
Save from the trickling household rill ;  
But, stepping o'er the cottage-sill,  
Forthwith a little Girl appeared.

She to the Meeting-house was bound  
In hopes some tidings there to gather ;  
No glimpse it is, no doubtful gleam ;  
She saw—and uttered with a scream,  
" My father ! here's my father !"

The very word was plainly heard,  
Heard plainly by the wretched Mother—  
Her joy was like a deep affright :  
And forth she rushed into the light,  
And saw it was another !

And, instantly, upon the earth,  
Beneath the full moon shining bright,  
Close to the Ass's feet she fell ;  
At the same moment Peter Bell  
Dismounts in most unhappy plight.

As he beheld the Woman lie  
Breathless and motionless, the mind  
Of Peter sadly was confused ;  
But, though to such demands unused,  
And helpless almost as the blind,

He raised her up ; and, while he held  
Her body propped against his knee,  
The Woman waked—and when she spied  
The poor Ass standing by her side,  
She moaned most bitterly.

" Oh ! God be praised—my heart's at  
ease—  
For he is dead—I know it well !"  
—At this she wept a bitter flood ;  
And, in the best way that he could,  
His tale did Peter tell.

He trembles—he is pale as death ;  
His voice is weak with perturbation ;  
He turns aside his head, he pauses ;  
Poor Peter, from a thousand causes,  
Is crippled sore in his narration.

At length she learned how he espied  
The Ass in that small meadow-ground ;  
And that her Husband now lay dead,  
Beside that luckless river's bed  
In which he had been drowned.

A piercing look the Widow cast  
Upon the Beast that near her stands ;  
She sees 'tis he, that 'tis the same ;  
She calls the poor Ass by his name,  
And wrings, and wrings her hands.

"O wretched loss—untimely stroke !  
If he had died upon his bed !  
He knew not one forewarning pain ;  
He never will come home again—  
Is dead, for ever dead !"

Beside the woman Peter stands ;  
His heart is opening more and more ;  
A holy sense pervades his mind ;  
He feels what he for human kind  
Has never felt before.

At length, by Peter's arm sustained,  
The Woman rises from the ground—  
"Oh, mercy ! something must be done,  
My little Rachel, you must run,—  
Some willing neighbour must be found.

"Make haste—my little Rachel—do,  
The first you meet with—bid him come,  
Ask him to lend his horse to-night,  
And this good Man, whom Heaven requite,  
Will help to bring the body home."

Away goes Rachel weeping loud ;—  
An Infant, waked by her distress,  
Makes in the house a piteous cry ;  
And Peter hears the Mother sigh,  
"Seven are they, and all fatherless !"

And now is Peter taught to feel  
That man's heart is a holy thing ;  
And Nature, through a world of death,  
Breathes into him a second breath,  
More searching than the breath of spring.

Upon a stone the Woman sits  
In agony of silent grief—  
From his own thoughts did Peter start ;  
He longs to press her to his heart,  
From love that cannot find relief.

But roused, as if through every limb  
Had past a sudden shock of dread,  
The Mother o'er the threshold flies,  
And up the cottage stairs she hies,  
And on the pillow lays her burning head.

And Peter turns his steps aside  
Into a shade of darksome trees,  
Where he sits down, he knows not how,  
With his hands pressed against his brow,  
His elbows on his tremulous knees.

There, self-involved, does Peter sit  
Until no sign of life he makes,  
As if his mind were sinking deep  
Through years that have been long asleep  
The trance is passed away—he wakes ;

He lifts his head—and sees the Ass  
Yet standing in the clear moonshine ;  
"When shall I be as good as thou ?  
Oh ! would, poor beast, that I had now  
A heart but half as good as thine !"

But *He*—who deviously hath sought  
His Father through the lonesome woods,  
Hath sought, proclaiming to the ear  
Of night his grief and sorrowful fear—  
He comes, escaped from fields and floods ;—

With weary pace is drawing nigh ;  
He sees the Ass—and nothing living  
Had ever such a fit of joy  
As hath this little orphan Boy,  
For he has no misgiving !

Forth to the gentle Ass he springs,  
And up about his neck he climbs ;  
In loving words he talks to him,  
He kisses, kisses face and limb,—  
He kisses him a thousand times !

This Peter sees, while in the shade  
He stood beside the cottage-door ;  
And Peter Bell, the ruffian wild,  
Sobs loud, he sobs even like a child,  
"O God ! I can endure no more !"

—Here ends my Tale : for in a trice  
Arrived a neighbour with his horse ;  
Peter went forth with him straightway ;  
And, with due care, ere break of day,  
Together they brought back the Corse.

And many years did this poor Ass,  
Whom once it was my luck to see  
Cropping the shrubs of Leming-Lane,  
Help by his labour to maintain  
The Widow and her family.

And Peter Bell, who, till that night,  
Had been the wildest of his clan,  
Forsook his crimes, renounced his folly,  
And, after ten months' melancholy,  
Became a good and honest man. 1798.

### THE SIMPLON PASS<sup>1</sup>

———BROOK and road  
Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,  
And with them did we journey several hours  
At a slow step. The immeasurable height  
Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,  
The stationary blasts of waterfalls,  
And in the narrow rent, at every turn,  
Winds thwarting winds bewildered and forlorn,  
The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,  
The rocks that muttered close upon our ears,  
Black drizzling crags that spake by the way-side  
As if a voice were in them, the sick sight  
And giddy prospect of the raving stream,  
The unfettered clouds and region of the heavens,  
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light—  
Were all like workings of one mind, the features  
Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,  
Characters of the great Apocalypse,  
The types and symbols of Eternity,  
Of first, and last, and midst, and without end. 1799.

### INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING  
THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD AND  
EARLY YOUTH

WRITTEN IN GERMANY<sup>2</sup>

This Extract is reprinted from "THE FRIEND."

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe!  
Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of thought!  
And giv'st to forms and images a breath  
And everlasting motion! not in vain,  
By day or star-light, thus from my first dawn

<sup>1</sup> See Prelude, book vi. p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> See Prelude, book i. p. 240.

Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me  
The passions that build up our human soul;  
Not with the mean and vulgar works of Man;

But with high objects, with enduring things,  
With life and nature; purifying thus  
The elements of feeling and of thought,  
And sanctifying by such discipline  
Both pain and fear,—until we recognise  
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me

With stinted kindness. In November days,

When vapours rolling down the valleys made

A lonely scene more lonesome; among woods

At noon; and 'mid the calm of summer nights,

When, by the margin of the trembling lake,

Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I went  
In solitude, such intercourse was mine:

Mine was it in the fields both day and night,

And by the waters, all the summer long.  
And in the frosty season, when the sun

Was set, and, visible for many a mile,  
The cottage-windows through the twilight blazed,

I heeded not the summons: happy time  
It was indeed for all of us; for me

It was a time of rapture! Clear and loud  
The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled

about,  
Proud and exulting like an untired horse

That cares not for his home.—All shod with steel

We hissed along the polished ice, in games  
Confederate, imitative of the chase

And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,

The pack loud-chiming, and the hunted hare.

So through the darkness and the cold we flew,

And not a voice was idle: with the din  
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;

The leafless trees and every icy crag  
Tinkled like iron; while far-distant hills

Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the stars,

Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the west

The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
Into a silent bay, or sportively  
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,

To cut across the reflex of a star ;  
Image, that, flying still before me, gleamed  
Upon the glassy plain : and oftentimes,  
When we had given our bodies to the wind,

And all the shadowy banks on either side  
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still

The rapid line of motion, then at once  
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,  
Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs  
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round !  
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,  
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched

Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

1799.

### THERE WAS A BOY

Written in Germany. This is an extract from the poem on my own poetical education. This practice of making an instrument of their own fingers is known to most boys, though some are more skilful at it than others. William Raincock of Rayrigg, a fine spirited lad, took the lead of all my schoolfellows in this art.

THERE was a Boy ; ye knew him well, ye cliffs

And islands of Winander !—many a time,  
At evening, when the earliest stars began  
To move along the edges of the hills,  
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,  
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake ;

And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands

Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth

Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,  
That they might answer him.—And they would shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,

Responsive to his call,—with quivering  
peals,

And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud

Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse wild  
Of jocund din ! And, when there came a pause

Of silence such as baffled his best skill :  
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung

Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
Has carried far into his heart the voice  
Of mountain-torrents ; or the visible scene  
Would enter unawares into his mind  
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received

Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates, and died

In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.

Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale  
Where he was born and bred : the church-yard hangs

Upon a slope above the village-school ;  
And, through that church-yard when my way has led

On summer-evenings, I believe, that there  
A long half-hour together I have stood  
Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies !

1799.

### NUTTING

Written in Germany ; intended as part of a poem on my own life, but struck out as not being wanted there. Like most of my schoolfellows I was an impassioned nutter. For this pleasure, the vale of Esthwaite, abounding in coppice-wood, furnished a very wide range. These verses arose out of the remembrance of feelings I had often had when a boy, and particularly in the extensive woods that still stretch from the side of Esthwaite Lake towards Graythwaite, the seat of the ancient family of Sandys.

—It seems a day  
(I speak of one from many singled out)  
One of those heavenly days that cannot die ;  
When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,  
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth  
With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,  
A nutting-crook in hand ; and turned my steps

And <sup>H</sup> some far-distant wood, a Figure  
 quaint,  
 Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off  
 weeds  
 Which for that service had been husbanded,  
 By exhortation of my frugal Dame—  
 Motley accoutrement, of power to smile  
 At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—and,  
 in truth,  
 More ragged than need was ! O'er pathless  
 rocks,  
 Through beds of matted fern, and tangled  
 thickets,  
 Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook  
 Unvisited, where not a broken bough  
 Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious  
 sign  
 Of devastation ; but the hazels rose  
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung.  
 A virgin scene !—A little while I stood,  
 Breathing with such suppression of the heart  
 As joy delights in ; and, with wise restraint  
 Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed  
 The banquet ;—or beneath the trees I sate  
 Among the flowers, and with the flowers I  
 played ;  
 A temper known to those, who, after long  
 And weary expectation, have been blest  
 With sudden happiness beyond all hope.  
 Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves  
 The violets of five seasons re-appear  
 And fade, unseen by any human eye ;  
 Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on  
 For ever ; and I saw the sparkling foam,  
 And—with my cheek on one of those green  
 stones  
 That, fleeced with moss, under the shady  
 trees,  
 Lay round me, scattered like a flock of  
 sheep—  
 I heard the murmur and the murmuring  
 sound,  
 In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay  
 Tribute to ease ; and, of its joy secure,  
 The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,  
 Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,  
 And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,  
 And dragged to earth both branch and  
 bough, with crash  
 And merciless ravage : and the shady nook  
 Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,  
 Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up  
 Their quiet being : and, unless I now  
 Confound my present feelings with the past :

Ere from the mutilated bower I turned  
 Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,  
 I felt a sense of pain when I beheld  
 The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky—  
 Then, dearest Maiden, move along these  
 shades

In gentleness of heart ; with gentle hand  
 Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

1799.

The next three poems were written in  
 Germany.

STRANGE fits of passion have I known :  
 And I will dare to tell,  
 But in the Lover's ear alone,  
 What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day  
 Fresh as a rose in June,  
 I to her cottage bent my way,  
 Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,  
 All over the wide lea ;  
 With quickening pace my horse drew nigh  
 Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard-plot ;  
 And, as we climbed the hill,  
 The sinking moon to Lucy's cot  
 Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,  
 Kind Nature's gentlest boon !  
 And all the while my eyes I kept  
 On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof  
 He raised, and never stopped :  
 When down behind the cottage roof,  
 At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will  
 slide  
 Into a Lover's head !  
 " O mercy ! " to myself I cried,  
 " If Lucy should be dead ! "

1799.

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways  
 Beside the springs of Dove,  
 A Maid whom there were none to praise  
 And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone  
Half hidden from the eye !  
—Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be ;  
But she is in her grave, and, oh,  
The difference to me !

1799.

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,  
In lands beyond the sea ;  
Nor, England ! did I know till then  
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !  
Nor will I quit thy shore  
A second time ; for still I seem  
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel  
The joy of my desire ;  
And she I cherished turned her wheel  
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed  
The bowers where Lucy played ;  
And thine too is the last green field  
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

1799.

Composed in the Hartz Forest.

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,  
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown ;  
This Child I to myself will take ;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A Lady of my own.

"Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse : and with me  
The Girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

"She shall be sportive as the fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn,  
Or up the mountain springs ;  
And her's shall be the breathing balm,  
And her's the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend  
To her ; for her the willow bend ;  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motions of the Storm  
Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

"The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.

"And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell ;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy dell."

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—  
How soon my Lucy's race was run !  
She died, and left to me  
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;  
The memory of what has been,  
And never more will be.

1799.

Written in Germany.

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;  
I had no human fears :  
She seemed a thing that could not feel  
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;  
She neither hears nor sees ;  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

1799.

#### A POET'S EPITAPH

ART thou a Statist in the van  
Of public conflicts trained and bred ?  
—First learn to love one living man ;  
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou ?—draw not nigh !  
Go, carry to some fitter place  
The keenness of that practised eye,  
The hardness of that fallow face.



Art thou a Man of purple cheer?  
A rosy Man, right plump to see?  
Approach ; yet, Doctor, not too near,  
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,  
A Soldier and no man of chaff?  
Welcome !—but lay thy sword aside,  
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou? one, all eyes,  
Philosopher ! a fingering slave,  
One that would peep and botanise  
Upon his mother's grave?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,  
O turn aside,—and take, I pray,  
That he below may rest in peace,  
Thy ever-dwindling soul, away !

A Moralist perchance appears ;  
Led, Heaven knows how ! to this poor  
sod :  
And he has neither eyes nor ears ;  
Himself his world, and his own God ;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can  
cling  
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small ;  
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,  
An intellectual All-in-all !

Shut close the door ; press down the latch ;  
Sleep in thy intellectual crust ;  
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch  
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,  
And clad in homely russet brown?  
He murmurs near the running brooks .  
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,  
Or fountain in a noon-day grove ;  
And you must love him, ere to you  
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,  
Of hill and valley, he has viewed ;  
And impulses of deeper birth  
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie  
Some random truths he can impart,—  
The harvest of a quiet eye  
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak ; both Man and Boy,  
Hath been an idler in the land ;  
Contented if he might enjoy  
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength ;  
Come, weak as is a breaking wave !  
Here stretch thy body at full length ;  
Or build thy house upon this grave.  
1799.

#### ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF —

Composed at Goslar, in Germany.

I COME, ye little noisy Crew,  
Not long your pastime to prevent ;  
I heard the blessing which to you  
Our common Friend and Father sent.  
I kissed his cheek before he died ;  
And when his breath was fled,  
I raised, while kneeling by his side,  
His hand :—it dropped like lead.  
Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all  
That can be done, will never fall  
Like his till they are dead.  
By night or day blow foul or fair,  
Ne'er will the best of all your train  
Play with the locks of his white hair,  
Or stand between his knees again.  
Here did he sit confined for hours ;  
But he could see the woods and plains,  
Could hear the wind and mark the showers  
Come streaming down the streaming panes.  
Now stretched beneath his grass-green  
mound

He rests a prisoner of the ground.  
He loved the breathing air,  
He loved the sun, but if it rise  
Or set, to him where now he lies,  
Brings not a moment's care.  
Alas ! what idle words ; but take  
The Dirge which for our Master's sake  
And yours, love prompted me to make.  
The rhymes so homely in attire  
With learned cars may ill agree,  
But chanted by your Orphan Quire  
Will make a touching melody.

## DIRGE

Mourn, Shepherd, near thy old grey stone;  
Thou Angler, by the silent flood;  
And mourn when thou art all alone,  
Thou Woodman, in the distant wood!

Thou one blind Sailor, rich in joy  
Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum;  
And mourn, thou poor half-witted Boy!  
Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb.

Thou drooping sick Man, bless the Guide  
Who checked or turned thy headstrong  
youth,  
As he before had sanctified  
Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye Striplings, light of heart and gay,  
Bold settlers on some foreign shore,  
Give, when your thoughts are turned this  
way,  
A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain  
With one accord our voices raise,  
Let sorrow overcharged with pain  
Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting  
From ill we meet or good we miss,  
May touches of his memory bring  
Fond healing, like a mother's kiss.

1799.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME YEARS  
AFTER

LONG time his pulse hath ceased to beat  
But benefits, his gift, we trace—  
Expressed in every eye we meet  
Round this dear Vale, his native place.

To stately Hall and Cottage rude  
Flowed from his life what still they hold,  
Light pleasures, every day, renewed;  
And blessings half a century old.

Oh true of heart, of spirit gay,  
Thy faults, where not already gone  
From memory, prolong their stay  
For charity's sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss;  
And what beyond this thought we crave  
Comes in the promise from the Cross,  
Shining upon thy happy grave.

## MATTHEW

In the School of ——— is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the several persons who have been Schoolmasters there since the foundation of the School, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those names the Author wrote the following lines.

Such a Tablet as is here spoken of continued to be preserved in Hawkshead School, though the inscriptions were not brought down to our time. This and other poems connected with Matthew would not gain by a literal detail of facts. Like the Wanderer in "The Excursion," this Schoolmaster was made up of several both of his class and men of other occupations. I do not ask pardon for what there is of untruth in such verses, considered strictly as matters of fact. It is enough if, being true and consistent in spirit, they move and teach in a manner not unworthy of a Poet's calling.

If Nature, for a favourite child,  
In thee hath tempered so her clay,  
That every hour thy heart runs wild,  
Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines; and then review  
This tablet, that thus humbly rears  
In such diversity of hue  
Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of fame,  
Cipher and syllable! thine eye  
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,  
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,  
Then be it neither checked nor stayed:  
For Matthew a request I make  
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,  
Is silent as a standing pool;  
Far from the chimney's merry roar,  
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs  
Of one tired out with fun and madness;  
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes  
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup  
Of still and serious thought went round,  
It seemed as if he drank it up—  
He felt with spirit so profound.

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould !  
Thou happy Soul ! and can it be  
That these two words of glittering gold  
Are all that must remain of thee ?

1799.

## THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

We walked along, while bright and red  
Uprose the morning sun ;  
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,  
" The will of God be done ! "

A village schoolmaster was he,  
With hair of glittering grey ;  
As blithe a man as you could see  
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,  
And by the steaming rills,  
We travelled merrily, to pass  
A day among the hills.

" Our work," said I, " was well begun,  
Then, from thy breast what thought,  
Beneath so beautiful a sun,  
So sad a sigh has brought ? "

A second time did Matthew stop ;  
And fixing still his eye  
Upon the eastern mountain-top,  
To me he made reply :

" Yon cloud with that long purple cleft  
Brings fresh into my mind  
A day like this which I have left  
Full thirty years behind.

" And just above yon slope of corn  
Such colours, and no other,  
Were in the sky, that April morn,  
Of this the very brother.

" With rod and line I sued the sport  
Which that sweet season gave,  
And, to the church-yard come, stopped short  
Beside my daughter's grave.

" Nine summers had she scarcely seen,  
The pride of all the vale ;  
And then she sang ;—she would have been  
A very nightingale.

" Six feet in earth my Emma lay ;  
And yet I loved her more,  
For so it seemed, than till that day  
I e'er had loved before.

" And, turning from her grave, I met,  
Beside the church-yard yew,  
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet  
With points of morning dew.

" A basket on her head she bare ;  
Her brow was smooth and white :  
To see a child so very fair,  
It was a pure delight !

" No fountain from its rocky cave  
E'er tripped with foot so free ;  
She seemed as happy as a wave  
That dances on the sea.

" There came from me a sigh of pain  
Which I could ill confine ;  
I looked at her, and looked again :  
And did not wish her mine ! "

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,  
Methinks, I see him stand,  
As at that moment, with a bough  
Of wilding in his hand.

1799.

## THE FOUNTAIN

## A CONVERSATION

We talked with open heart, and tongue  
Affectionate and true,  
A pair of friends, though I was young,  
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,  
Beside a mossy seat ;  
And from the turf a fountain broke,  
And gurgled at our feet.

" Now, Matthew ! " said I, " let us match  
This water's pleasant tune  
With some old border-song, or catch  
That suits a summer's noon ;

" Or of the church-clock and the chimes  
Sing here beneath the shade,  
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes  
Which you last April made ! "

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed  
The spring beneath the tree ;  
And thus the dear old Man replied,  
The grey-haired man of glee :

" No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears ;  
How merrily it goes !  
"Twill murmur on a thousand years,  
And flow as now it flows.

" And here, on this delightful day,  
I cannot choose but think  
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay  
Beside this fountain's brink.

" My eyes are dim with childish tears,  
My heart is idly stirred,  
For the same sound is in my ears  
Which in those days I heard.

" Thus fares it still in our decay :  
And yet the wiser mind  
Mourns less for what age takes away  
Than what it leaves behind.

" The blackbird amid leafy trees,  
The lark above the hill,  
Let loose their carols when they please  
Are quiet when they will.

" With Nature never do *they* wage  
A foolish strife ; they see  
A happy youth, and their old age  
Is beautiful and free :

" But we are pressed by heavy laws ;  
And often, glad no more,  
We wear a face of joy, because  
We have been glad of yore.

" If there be one who need bemoan  
His kindred laid in earth,  
The household hearts that were his own ;  
It is the man of mirth.

" My days, my Friend, are almost gone,  
My life has been approved,  
And many love me ; but by none  
Am I enough beloved."

" Now both himself and me he wrongs,  
The man who thus complains ;  
I live and sing my idle songs  
Upon these happy plains ;

" And, Matthew, for thy children dead  
I'll be a son to thee !"  
At this he grasped my hand, and said,  
" Alas ! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side ;  
And down the smooth descent  
Of the green sheep-track did we glide ;  
And through the wood we went ;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,  
He sang those witty rhymes  
About the crazy old church-clock,  
And the bewildered chimes.

1799.

## TO A SEXTON

Written in Germany.

LET thy wheel-barrow alone—  
Wherefore, Sexton, piling still  
In thy bone-house bone on bone ?  
'Tis already like a hill  
In a field of battle made,  
Where three thousand skulls are laid ;  
These died in peace each with the other,—  
Father, sister, friend, and brother.

Mark the spot to which I point !  
From this platform, eight feet square,  
Take not even a finger-joint :  
Andrew's whole fire-side is there.  
Here, alone, before thine eyes,  
Simon's sickly daughter lies,  
From weakness now, and pain defended,  
Whom he twenty winters tended.

Look but at the gardener's pride—  
How he glories, when he sees  
Roses, lilies, side by side,  
Violets in families !  
By the heart of Man, his tears,  
By his hopes and by his fears,  
Thou, too heedless, art the Warden  
Of a far superior garden.

Thus then, each to other dear,  
Let them all in quiet lie,  
Andrew there, and Susan here,  
Neighbours in mortality.  
And, should I live through sun and rain  
Seven widowed years without my Jane,  
O Sexton, do not then remove her,  
Let one grave hold the Loved and Lover !

1799.

## THE DANISH BOY

## A FRAGMENT

Written in Germany. It was entirely a fancy ;  
but intended as a prelude to a ballad-poem never  
written.

## I

BETWEEN two sister moorland rills  
There is a spot that seems to lie  
Sacred to flowerets of the hills,  
And sacred to the sky.  
And in this smooth and open dell  
There is a tempest-stricken tree ;  
A corner-stone by lightning cut,  
The last stone of a lonely hut ;  
And in this dell you see  
A thing no storm can e'er destroy,  
The shadow of a Danish Boy.

## II

In clouds above, the lark is heard,  
But drops not here to earth for rest ;  
Within this lonesome nook the bird  
Did never build her nest.  
No beast, no bird hath here his home ;  
Bees, wafted on the breezy air,  
Pass high above those fragrant bells  
To other flowers :—to other dells  
Their burthens do they bear ;  
The Danish Boy walks here alone :  
The lovely dell is all his own.

## III

A Spirit of noon-day is he ;  
Yet seems a form of flesh and blood ;  
Nor piping shepherd shall he be,  
Nor herd-boy of the wood.  
A regal vest of fur he wears,  
In colour like a raven's wing ;  
It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew ;  
But in the storm 'tis fresh and blue  
As budding pines in spring ;  
His helmet has a vernal grace,  
Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

## IV

A harp is from his shoulder slung ;  
Resting the harp upon his knee,  
To words of a forgotten tongue  
He suits its melody.

Of flocks upon the neighbouring hill  
He is the darling and the joy ;  
And often, when no cause appears,  
The mountain-ponies prick their ears,  
—They hear the Danish Boy,  
While in the dell he sings alone  
Beside the tree and corner-stone.

## V

There sits he ; in his face you spy  
No trace of a ferocious air,  
Nor ever was a cloudless sky  
So steady or so fair.  
The lovely Danish Boy is blest  
And happy in his flowery cove :  
From bloody deeds his thoughts are far ;  
And yet he warbles songs of war,  
That seem like songs of love,  
For calm and gentle is his mien ;  
Like a dead Boy he is serene.

1799.

## LUCY GRAY

## OR, SOLITUDE

Written at Goslar in Germany. It was founded  
on a circumstance told me by my Sister, of a little  
girl who, not far from Halifax in Yorkshire, was  
bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were  
traced by her parents to the middle of the lock of  
a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or  
forward, could be traced. The body however was  
found in the canal. The way in which the inci-  
dent was treated and the spiritualising of the  
character might furnish hints for contrasting the  
imaginative influences which I have endeavoured  
to throw over common life with Crabbe's matter  
of fact style of treating subjects of the same kind.  
This is not spoken to his disparagement, far from  
it, but to direct the attention of thoughtful readers,  
into whose hands these notes may fall, to a com-  
parison that may both enlarge the circle of their  
sensibilities, and tend to produce in them a catholic  
judgment.

OFT I had heard of Lucy Gray :  
And, when I crossed the wild,  
I chanced to see at break of day  
The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;  
She dwelt on a wide moor,  
—The sweetest thing that ever grew  
Beside a human door !

You yet may spy the fawn at play,  
The hare upon the green ;  
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray  
Will never more be seen.

"To-night will be a stormy night—  
You to the town must go ;  
And take a lantern, Child, to light  
Your mother through the snow."

"That, Father ! will I gladly do :  
'Tis scarcely afternoon—  
The minster-clock has just struck two,  
And yonder is the moon !"

At this the Father raised his hook,  
And snapped a faggot-band ;  
He plied his work ;—and Lucy took  
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :  
With many a wanton stroke  
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,  
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time :  
She wandered up and down ;  
And many a hill did Lucy climb :  
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night  
Went shouting far and wide ;  
But there was neither sound nor sight  
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood  
That overlooked the moor ;  
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,  
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward,  
cried,

"In heaven we all shall meet ;"  
—When in the snow the mother spied  
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge  
They tracked the footmarks small ;  
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,  
And by the long stone-wall ;

And then an open field they crossed :  
The marks were still the same ;  
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;  
And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank  
Those footmarks, one by one,  
Into the middle of the plank ;  
And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day  
She is a living child ;  
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray  
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,  
And never looks behind ;  
And sings a solitary song  
That whistles in the wind.

1799.

## RUTH

Written in Germany. Suggested by an account  
I had of a wanderer in Somersetshire.

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate,  
Her Father took another Mate ;  
And Ruth, not seven years old,  
A slighted child, at her own will  
Went wandering over dale and hill,  
In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,  
And music from that pipe could draw  
Like sounds of winds and floods ;  
Had built a bower upon the green,  
As if she from her birth had been  
An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father's roof, alone  
She seemed to live ; her thoughts her own ;  
Herself her own delight ;  
Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay ;  
And, passing thus the live-long day,  
She grew to woman's height.

There came a Youth from Georgia's shore—  
A military casque he wore,  
With splendid feathers drest ;  
He brought them from the Cherokees ;  
The feathers nodded in the breeze,  
And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung :  
But no ! he spake the English tongue,  
And bore a soldier's name ;  
And, when America was free  
From battle and from jeopardy,  
He 'cross the ocean came.

With hues of genius on his cheek  
In finest tones the Youth could speak :  
—While he was yet a boy,  
The moon, the glory of the sun,  
And streams that murmur as they run,  
Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely Youth ! I guess  
The panther in the wilderness  
Was not so fair as he ;  
And, when he chose to sport and play,  
No dolphin ever was so gay  
Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought,  
And with him many tales he brought  
Of pleasure and of fear ;  
Such tales as told to any maid  
By such a Youth, in the green shade,  
Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls—a happy rout !  
Who quit their fold with dance and shout,  
Their pleasant Indian town,  
To gather strawberries all day long ;  
Returning with a choral song  
When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change  
Their blossoms, through a boundless range  
Of intermingling hues ;  
With budding, fading, faded flowers  
They stand the wonder of the bowers  
From morn to evening dews.

He told of the magnolia, spread  
High as a cloud, high over head !  
The cypress and her spire ;  
—Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam  
Cover a hundred leagues, and seem  
To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,  
And many an endless, endless lake,  
With all its fairy crowds  
Of islands, that together lie  
As quietly as spots of sky  
Among the evening clouds.

“ How pleasant,” then he said, “ it were  
A fisher or a hunter there,  
In sunshine or in shade  
To wander with an easy mind ;  
And build a household fire, and find  
A home in every glade !

“ What days and what bright years ! Ah me !  
Our life were life indeed, with thee  
So passed in quiet bliss,  
And all the while,” said he, “ to know  
That we were in a world of woe,  
On such an earth as this !”

And then he sometimes interwove  
Fond thoughts about a father's love.  
“ For there,” said he, “ are spun  
Around the heart such tender ties,  
That our own children to our eyes  
Are dearer than the sun.

“ Sweet Ruth ! and could you go with me  
My helpmate in the woods to be,  
Our shed at night to rear ;  
Or run, my own adopted bride,  
A sylvan huntress at my side,  
And drive the flying deer !

“ Beloved Ruth !”—No more he said,  
The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed  
A solitary tear :  
She thought again—and did agree  
With him to sail across the sea,  
And drive the flying deer.

“ And now, as fitting is and right,  
We in the church our faith will plight,  
A husband and a wife.”  
Even so they did ; and I may say  
That to sweet Ruth that happy day  
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,  
Delighted all the while to think  
That on those lonesome floods,  
And green savannahs, she should share  
His board with lawful joy, and bear  
His name in the wild woods.

But, as you have before been told,  
This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,  
And, with his dancing crest,  
So beautiful, through savage lands  
Had roamed about, with vagrant bands  
Of Indians in the West.

The wind, the tempest roaring high,  
The tumult of a tropic sky,  
Might well be dangerous food  
For him, a Youth to whom was given  
So much of earth—so much of heaven,  
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found  
 Irregular in sight or sound  
 Did to his mind impart  
 A kindred impulse, seemed allied  
 To his own powers, and justified  
 The workings of his heart.

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,  
 The beauteous forms of nature wrought,  
 Fair trees and gorgeous flowers ;  
 The breezes their own languor lent ;  
 The stars had feelings, which they sent  
 Into those favoured bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits, I ween  
 That sometimes there did intervene  
 Pure hopes of high intent :  
 For passions linked to forms so fair  
 And stately, needs must have their share  
 Of noble sentiment.

But ill he lived, much evil saw,  
 With men to whom no better law  
 Nor better life was known ;  
 Deliberately, and undecieved,  
 Those wild men's vices he received,  
 And gave them back his own.

His genius and his moral frame  
 Were thus impaired, and he became  
 The slave of low desires :  
 A Man who without self-control  
 Would seek what the degraded soul  
 Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feigned delight  
 Had wooed the Maiden, day and night  
 Had loved her, night and morn :  
 What could he less than love a Maid  
 Whose heart with so much nature played ?  
 So kind and so forlorn !

Sometimes, most earnestly, he said,  
 " O Ruth ! I have been worse than dead ;  
 False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain,  
 Encompassed me on every side  
 When I, in confidence and pride,  
 Had crossed the Atlantic main.

" Before me shone a glorious world—  
 Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled  
 To music suddenly :  
 I looked upon those hills and plains,  
 And seemed as if let loose from chains,  
 To live at liberty.

" No more of this ; for now, by thee  
 Dear Ruth ! more happily set free  
 With nobler zeal I burn ;  
 My soul from darkness is released,  
 Like the whole sky when to the east  
 The morning doth return."

Full soon that better mind was gone ;  
 No hope, no wish remained, not one,—  
 They stirred him now no more ;  
 New objects did new pleasure give,  
 And once again he wished to live  
 As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,  
 They for the voyage were prepared,  
 And went to the sea-shore,  
 But, when they thither came the Youth  
 Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth  
 Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth !—Such pains she  
 had,  
 That she in half a year was mad,  
 And in a prison housed ;  
 And there, with many a doleful song  
 Made of wild words, her cup of wrong  
 She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,  
 Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew,  
 Nor pastimes of the May ;  
 —They all were with her in her cell ;  
 And a clear brook with cheerful knell  
 Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,  
 There came a respite to her pain ;  
 She from her prison fled ;  
 But of the Vagrant none took thought ;  
 And where it liked her best she sought  
 Her shelter and her bread.

Among the fields she breathed again :  
 The master-current of her brain  
 Ran permanent and free ;  
 And, coming to the Banks of Tone,  
 There did she rest ; and dwell alone  
 Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools  
 That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,  
 And airs that gently stir  
 The vernal leaves—she loved them still ;  
 Nor ever taxed them with the ill  
 Which had been done to her.



A Barn her *winter* bed supplies ;  
But, till the warmth of summer skies  
And summer days is gone,  
(And all do in this tale agree)  
She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,  
And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray !  
And Ruth will, long before her day,  
Be broken down and old :  
Sore aches she needs must have ! but less  
Of mind, than body's wretchedness,  
From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is prest by want of food,  
She from her dwelling in the wood  
Repairs to a road-side ;  
And there she begs at one steep place  
Where up and down with easy pace  
The horsemen-travellers ride.

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,  
Or thrown away ; but with a flute  
Her loneliness she cheers :  
This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,  
At evening in his homeward walk  
The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills  
Setting her little water-mills  
By spouts and fountains wild—  
Such small machinery as she turned  
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,  
A young and happy Child !

Farewell ! and when thy days are told,  
Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mould  
Thy corpse shall buried be,  
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,  
And all the congregation sing  
A Christian psalm for thee.

1799.

### WRITTEN IN GERMANY

#### ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY

A bitter winter it was when these verses were composed by the side of my Sister, in our lodgings at a draper's house in the romantic imperial town of Goslar, on the edge of the Hartz Forest. In this town the German emperors of the Franconian line were accustomed to keep their court, and it retains vestiges of ancient splendour. So severe

was the cold of this winter, that when we passed out of the parlour warmed by the stove, our cheeks were struck by the air as by cold iron. I slept in a room over a passage which was not ceiled. The people of the house used to say, rather unfeelingly, that they expected I should be frozen to death some night ; but, with the protection of a pelisse lined with fur, and a dog's-skin bonnet, such as was worn by the peasants, I walked daily on the ramparts, or in a sort of public ground or garden, in which was a pond. Here, I had no companion but a kingfisher, a beautiful creature, that used to glance by me. I consequently became much attached to it. During these walks I composed the poem that follows.

The Reader must be apprised, that the Stoves in North-Germany generally have the impression of a galloping horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German and  
Norse !

Let me have the song of the kettle ;  
And the tongs and the poker, instead of  
that horse

That gallops away with such fury and force  
On this dreary dull plate of black metal.

See that Fly,—a disconsolate creature !  
perhaps

A child of the field or the grove ;  
And, sorrow for him ! the dull treacherous  
beast

Has seduced the poor fool from his winter  
retreat,  
And he creeps to the edge of my stove.

Alas ! how he fumbles about the domains  
Which this comfortless oven environ !  
He cannot find out in what track he must  
crawl,

Now back to the tiles, then in search of the  
wall,

And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller  
bemazed :

The best of his skill he has tried ;  
His feelers, methinks, I can see him put  
forth

To the east and the west, to the south and  
the north ;

But he finds neither guide-post nor guide.

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg, and  
thigh !

His eyesight and hearing are lost ;

Between life and death his blood freezes and thaws ;  
 And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze  
 Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no mate has he near him—  
 while I  
 Can draw warmth from the cheek of my Love ;  
 As blest and as glad, in this desolate gloom,  
 As if green summer grass were the floor of my room,  
 And woodbines were hanging above.

Yet, God is my witness, thou small helpless Thing !  
 Thy life I would gladly sustain  
 Till summer come up from the south, and with crowds  
 Of thy brethren a march thou should'st sound through the clouds,  
 And back to the forests again !

1799.

## THE BROTHERS

This poem was composed in a grove at the north-eastern end of Grasmere lake, which grove was in a great measure destroyed by turning the high-road along the side of the water. The few trees that are left were spared at my intercession. The poem arose out of the fact, mentioned to me at Ennerdale, that a shepherd had fallen asleep upon the top of the rock called The Pillar, and perished as here described, his staff being left midway on the rock.

"THESE Tourists, heaven preserve us !  
 needs must live  
 A profitable life : some glance along,  
 Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,  
 And they were butterflies to wheel about  
 Long as the summer lasted : some, as wise,  
 Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,  
 Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,  
 Will look and scribble, scribble on and look,  
 Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,  
 Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn.  
 But, for that moping Son of Idleness,  
 Why can he tarry *yonder* ?—In our church-yard  
 Is neither epitaph nor monument,

Tombstone nor name—only the turf we tread  
 And a few natural graves."

To Jane, his wife,  
 Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.  
 It was a July evening ; and he sate  
 Upon the long stone-seat beneath the eaves  
 Of his old cottage,—as it chanced, that day,  
 Employed in winter's work. Upon the stone

His wife sate near him, teasing matted wool,  
 While, from the twin cards toothed with glittering wire,  
 He fed the spindle of his youngest child,  
 Who, in the open air, with due accord  
 Of busy hands and back-and-forward steps,  
 Her large round wheel was turning. Towards the field

In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,  
 Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,  
 While half an hour went by, the Priest had sent

Many a long look of wonder : and at last,  
 Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white ridge

Of carded wool which the old man had piled  
 He laid his implements with gentle care,  
 Each in the other locked ; and, down the path

That from his cottage to the church-yard led,

He took his way, impatient to accost  
 The Stranger, whom he saw still lingering there.

'Twas one well known to him in former days,

A Shepherd-lad ; who ere his sixteenth year  
 Had left that calling, tempted to entrust  
 His expectations to the fickle winds  
 And perilous waters ; with the mariners  
 A fellow-mariner ;—and so had fared  
 Through twenty seasons ; but he had been reared

Among the mountains, and he in his heart  
 Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.  
 Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard

The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds  
 Of caves and trees :—and, when the regular wind

Between the tropics filled the steady sail,  
 And blew with the same breath through days and weeks,

Lengthening invisibly its weary line

Along the cloudless Main, he, in those hours  
Of tiresome indolence, would often hang  
Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze ;  
And, while the broad blue wave and sparkling foam

Flashed round him images and hues that wrought

In union with the employment of his heart,  
He, thus by feverish passion overcome,  
Even with the organs of his bodily eye,  
Below him, in the bosom of the deep,  
Saw mountains ; saw the forms of sheep  
that grazed

On verdant hills—with dwellings among  
trees,

And shepherds clad in the same country  
grey

Which he himself had worn.<sup>1</sup>

And now, at last,  
From perils manifold, with some small  
wealth

Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian Isles,  
To his paternal home he is returned,  
With a determined purpose to resume  
The life he had lived there ; both for the  
sake

Of many darling pleasures, and the love  
Which to an only brother he has borne  
In all his hardships, since that happy time  
When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two  
Were brother-shepherds on their native  
hills.

—They were the last of all their race : and  
now,

When Leonard had approached his home,  
his heart

Failed in him ; and, not venturing to enquire  
Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,  
He to the solitary churchyard turned ;  
That, as he knew in what particular spot  
His family were laid, he thence might learn  
If still his Brother lived, or to the file  
Another grave was added.—He had found  
Another grave,—near which a full half-  
hour

He had remained ; but, as he gazed, there  
grew

Such a confusion in his memory,  
That he began to doubt ; and even to hope  
That he had seen this heap of turf before,—

<sup>1</sup> This description of the Calenture is sketched from an imperfect recollection of an admirable one in prose, by Mr. Gilbert, author of the *Hurricane*.

That it was not another grave ; but one  
He had forgotten. He had lost his path,  
As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked  
Through fields which once had been well  
known to him :

And oh what joy this recollection now  
Sent to his heart ! he lifted up his eyes,  
And, looking round, imagined that he  
saw

Strange alteration wrought on every side  
Among the woods and fields, and that the  
rocks,

And everlasting hills themselves were  
changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field  
had come,

Unseen by Leonard, at the churchyard  
gate

Stopped short,—and thence, at leisure,  
limb by limb

Perused him with a gay complacency.

Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,  
'Tis one of those who needs must leave  
the path

Of the world's business to go wild alone :  
His arms have a perpetual holiday ;  
The happy man will creep about the fields,  
Following his fancies by the hour, to bring  
Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles  
Into his face, until the setting sun  
Write fool upon his forehead.—Planted  
thus

Beneath a shed that over-arched the gate  
Of this rude churchyard, till the stars  
appeared

The good Man might have communed  
with himself,

But that the Stranger, who had left the  
grave,

Approached ; he recognised the Priest at  
once,

And, after greetings interchanged, and  
given

By Leonard to the Vicar as to one  
Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.

*Leonard.* You live, Sir, in these dales, a  
quiet life :

Your years make up one peaceful family ;  
And who would grieve and fret, if, welcome  
come

And welcome gone, they are so like each  
other,

They cannot be remembered ? Scarce a  
funeral

Comes to this churchyard once in eighteen months ;

And yet, some changes must take place among you :

And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks,

Can trace the finger of mortality,  
And see, that with our threescore years and ten

We are not all that perish.—I remember,  
(For many years ago I passed this road)  
There was a foot-way all along the fields  
By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that dark cleft !

To me it does not seem to wear the face  
Which then it had !

*Priest.* Nay, Sir, for aught I know,  
That chasm is much the same—

*Leonard.* But, surely, yonder—  
*Priest.* Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend

That does not play you false.—On that tall pike

(It is the loneliest place of all these hills)  
There were two springs which bubbled side by side,

As if they had been made that they might be

Companions for each other : the huge crag  
Was rent with lightning—one hath disappeared ;

The other, left behind, is flowing still.  
For accidents and changes such as these,  
We want not store of them ;—a water-spout

Will bring down half a mountain ; what a feast

For folks that wander up and down like you,

To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff  
One roaring cataract ! a sharp May-storm  
Will come with loads of January snow,  
And in one night send twenty score of sheep

To feed the ravens ; or a shepherd dies  
By some untoward death among the rocks :  
The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge ;

A wood is felled :—and then for our own homes !

A child is born or christened, a field ploughed,  
A daughter sent to service, a web spun,  
The old house-clock is decked with a new face ;

And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates

To chronicle the time, we all have here  
A pair of diaries,—one serving, Sir,  
For the whole dale, and one for each fire-side—

Yours was a stranger's judgment : for historians,

Commend me to these valleys !

*Leonard.* Yet your Churchyard  
Seems, if such freedom may be used with you,

To say that you are heedless of the past :  
An orphan could not find his mother's grave :

Here's neither head nor foot stone, plate of brass,

Cross-bones nor skull,—type of our earthly state

Nor emblem of our hopes : the dead man's home

Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

*Priest.* Why, there, Sir, is a thought that's new to me !

The stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg their bread

If every English churchyard were like ours ;  
Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth :  
We have no need of names and epitaphs ;  
We talk about the dead by our firesides.

And then, for our immortal part ! we want  
No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain tale :  
The thought of death sits easy on the man  
Who has been born and dies among the mountains.

*Leonard.* Your Dalesmen, then, do in each other's thoughts

Possess a kind of second life : no doubt  
You, Sir, could help me to the history  
Of half these graves ?

*Priest.* For eight-score winters past,  
With what I've witnessed, and with what I've heard,

Perhaps I might ; and, on a winter-evening,  
If you were seated at my chimney's nook,  
By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,  
We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round ;

Yet all in the broad highway of the world.  
Now there's a grave—your foot is half upon it,—

It looks just like the rest ; and yet that man  
Died broken-hearted.

*Leonard.* 'Tis a common case.

We'll take another : who is he that lies  
Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three  
graves ?

It touches on that piece of native rock  
Left in the church-yard wall.

*Priest.* That's Walter Ewbank.  
He had as white a head and fresh a cheek  
As ever were produced by youth and age  
Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.  
Through five long generations had the heart  
Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the  
bounds

Of their inheritance, that single cottage—  
You see it yonder ! and those few green  
fields.

They toiled and wrought, and still, from  
sire to son,

Each struggled, and each yielded as before  
A little—yet a little,—and old Walter,  
They left to him the family heart, and land  
With other burthens than the crop it bore.  
Year after year the old man still kept up  
A cheerful mind,—and buffeted with bond,  
Interest, and mortgages ; at last he sank,  
And went into his grave before his time.

Poor Walter ! whether it was care that  
spurred him

God only knows, but to the very last  
He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale :  
His pace was never that of an old man :  
I almost see him tripping down the path  
With his two grandsons after him :—but  
you,

Unless our Landlord be your host to-  
night,

Have far to travel,—and on these rough  
paths

Even in the longest day of midsummer—

*Leonard.* But those two Orphans !

*Priest.* Orphans !—Such they were—  
Yet not while Walter lived : for, though  
their parents

Lay buried side by side as now they lie,  
The old man was a father to the boys,  
Two fathers in one father : and if tears,  
Shed when he talked of them where they  
were not,

And hauntings from the infirmity of love,  
Are aught of what makes up a mother's  
heart,

This old Man, in the day of his old age,  
Was half a mother to them.—If you weep,  
Sir,

To hear a stranger talking about strangers,

Heaven bless you when you are among your  
kindred !

Ay—you may turn that way—it is a grave  
Which will bear looking at.

*Leonard.* These boys—I hope  
They loved this good old Man ?—

*Priest.* They did—and truly :  
But that was what we almost overlooked,  
They were such darlings of each other.

Yes,  
Though from the cradle they had lived with  
Walter,

The only kinsman near them, and though  
he

Inclined to both by reason of his age,  
With a more fond, familiar, tenderness ;  
They, notwithstanding, had much love to  
spare,

And it all went into each other's hearts.  
Leonard, the elder by just eighteen months,  
Was two years taller : 'twas a joy to see,  
To hear, to meet them !—From their house  
the school

Is distant three short miles, and in the time  
Of storm and thaw, when every watercourse  
And unbridged stream, such as you may  
have noticed

Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,  
Was swollen into a noisy rivulet,  
Would Leonard then, when elder boys re-  
mained

At home, go staggering through the slippery  
fords,

Bearing his brother on his back. I have  
seen him,

On windy days, in one of those stray  
brooks,

Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-  
leg deep,

Their two books lying both on a dry stone,  
Upon the hither side : and once I said,  
As I remember, looking round these rocks  
And hills on which we all of us were born,  
That God who made the great book of the  
world

Would bless such piety—

*Leonard.* It may be then—  
*Priest.* Never did worthier lads break  
English bread :

The very brightest Sunday Autumn saw  
With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts,  
Could never keep those boys away from  
church,

Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath breach.

Leonard and James! I warrant, every corner

Among these rocks, and every hollow place  
That venturous foot could reach, to one or both

Was known as well as to the flowers that grow there.

Like roe-bucks they went bounding o'er the hills;

They played like two young ravens on the crags:

Then they could write, ay and speak too, as well

As many of their betters—and for Leonard! The very night before he went away, In my own house I put into his hand A Bible, and I'd wager house and field That, if he be alive, he has it yet.

*Leonard.* It seems, these Brothers have not lived to be

A comfort to each other—

*Priest.* That they might

Live to such end is what both old and young  
In this our valley all of us have wished,  
And what, for my part, I have often prayed:  
But Leonard—

*Leonard.* Then James still is left among you!

*Priest.* 'Tis of the elder brother I am speaking:

They had an uncle;—he was at that time  
A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas:  
And, but for that same uncle, to this hour  
Leonard had never handled rope or shroud:  
For the boy loved the life which we lead here;

And though of unripe years, a stripling only,

His soul was knit to this his native soil.  
But, as I said, old Walter was too weak  
To strive with such a torrent; when he died,

The estate and house were sold; and all their sheep,

A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,

Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years:—

Well—all was gone, and they were destitute,  
And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake,  
Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.  
Twelve years are past since we had tidings from him.

If there were one among us who had heard

That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,

From the Great Gavel,<sup>1</sup> down by Leeza's banks,

And down the Enna, far as Egremont,  
The day would be a joyous festival;  
And those two bells of ours, which there you see—

Hanging in the open air—but, O good Sir!  
This is sad talk—they'll never sound for him—

Living or dead.—When last we heard of him,

He was in slavery among the Moors  
Upon the Barbary coast.—'Twas not a little  
That would bring down his spirit; and no doubt,

Before it ended in his death, the Youth  
Was sadly crossed.—Poor Leonard! when we parted,

He took me by the hand, and said to me,  
If e'er he should grow rich, he would return,  
To live in peace upon his father's land,  
And lay his bones among us.

*Leonard.* If that day  
Should come, 'twould needs be a glad day for him;

He would himself, no doubt, be happy then  
As any that should meet him—

*Priest.* Happy! Sir—

*Leonard.* You said his kindred all were in their graves,

And that he had one Brother—

*Priest.* That is but  
A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth  
James, though not sickly, yet was delicate;  
And Leonard being always by his side  
Had done so many offices about him,  
That, though he was not of a timid nature,  
Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy  
In him was somewhat checked; and, when his Brother

Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,  
The little colour that he had was soon

<sup>1</sup> The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale.

The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale: on issuing from the Lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below Egremont.

Stolen from his cheek ; he drooped, and pined, and pined—

*Leonard.* But these are all the graves of full-grown men !

*Priest.* Ay, Sir, that passed away : we took him to us ;

He was the child of all the dale—he lived Three months with one, and six months with another,

And wanted neither food, nor clothes, nor love :

And many, many happy days were his.

But, whether blithe or sad, 'tis my belief

His absent Brother still was at his heart.

And, when he dwelt beneath our roof, we found

(A practice till this time unknown to him)

That often, rising from his bed at night,

He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping

He sought his brother Leonard.—You are moved !

Forgive me, Sir : before I spoke to you,

I judged you most unkindly.

*Leonard.* But this Youth, How did he die at last ?

*Priest.* One sweet May-morning, (It will be twelve years since when Spring returns)

He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,

With two or three companions, whom their course

Of occupation led from height to height

Under a cloudless sun—till he, at length,

Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge

The humour of the moment, lagged behind.

You see yon precipice ;—it wears the shape

Of a vast building made of many crags ;

And in the midst is one particular rock

That rises like a column from the vale,

Whence by our shepherds it is called, THE PILLAR.

Upon its airy summit crowned with heath, The loiterer, not unnoticed by his comrades,

Lay stretched at ease ; but, passing by the place

On their return, they found that he was gone.

No ill was feared ; till one of them by chance

Entering, when evening was far spent, the house

Which at that time was James's home, there learned

That nobody had seen him all that day :

The morning came, and still he was unheard of :

The neighbours were alarmed, and to the brook

Some hastened ; some ran to the lake : ere noon

They found him at the foot of that same rock

Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after

I buried him, poor Youth, and there he lies !

*Leonard.* And that then is his grave !—

Before his death

You say that he saw many happy years ?

*Priest.* Ay, that he did—

*Leonard.* And all went well with him ?—

*Priest.* If he had one, the Youth had twenty homes.

*Leonard.* And you believe, then, that his mind was easy ?—

*Priest.* Yes, long before he died, he found that time

Is a true friend to sorrow ; and unless

His thoughts were turned on Leonard's luckless fortune,

He talked about him with a cheerful love.

*Leonard.* He could not come to an unhallowed end !

*Priest.* Nay, God forbid !—You recollect I mentioned

A habit which disquietude and grief

Had brought upon him ; and we all conjectured

That, as the day was warm, he had lain down

On the soft heath,—and, waiting for his comrades,

He there had fallen asleep ; that in his sleep

He to the margin of the precipice

Had walked, and from the summit had fallen headlong :

And so no doubt he perished. When the Youth

Fell, in his hand he must have grasped, we think,

His shepherd's staff ; for on that Pillar of rock

It had been caught mid-way ; and there for years

It hung ;—and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended—

The Stranger would have thanked him, but  
he felt

A gushing from his heart, that took away  
The power of speech. Both left the spot  
in silence ;

And Leonard, when they reached the  
churchyard gate,

As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned  
round,—

And, looking at the grave, he said, " My  
Brother ! "

The Vicar did not hear the words : and now,  
He pointed towards his dwelling-place,  
entreating

That Leonard would partake his homely  
fare :

The other thanked him with an earnest voice ;  
But added, that, the evening being calm,  
He would pursue his journey. So they  
parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a  
grove

That overhung the road : he there stopped  
short,

And, sitting down beneath the trees, re-  
viewed

All that the Priest had said : his early years  
Werewith him :—his long absence, cherished  
hopes,

And thoughts which had been his an hour  
before,

• All pressed on him with such a weight, that  
now,

This vale, where he had been so happy,  
seemed

A place in which he could not bear to live :  
So he relinquished all his purposes.

He travelled back to Egremont : and thence,  
That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest,  
Reminding him of what had passed between  
them ;

And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,  
That it was from the weakness of his heart  
He had not dared to tell him who he was.  
This done, he went on shipboard, and is  
now

A Seaman, a grey-headed Mariner.

1800.

## MICHAEL

### A PASTORAL POEM

Written at Town-end, Grasmere, about the  
same time as " The Brothers." The Sheepfold,

on which so much of the poem turns, remains, or  
rather the ruins of it. The character and cir-  
cumstances of Luke were taken from a family to  
whom had belonged, many years before, the  
house we lived in at Town-end, along with some  
fields and woodlands on the eastern shore of  
Grasmere. The name of the Evening Star was  
not in fact given to this house, but to another on  
the same side of the valley, more to the north.

If from the public way you turn your steps  
Up the tumultuous brook of Greenhead  
Ghyll,

You will suppose that with an upright path  
Your feet must struggle ; in such bold  
ascent

The pastoral mountains front you, face to  
face.

But, courage ! for around that boisterous  
brook

The mountains have all opened out them-  
selves,

And made a hidden valley of their own.  
No habitation can be seen ; but they  
Who journey thither find themselves alone  
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones,  
and kites'

That overhead are sailing in the sky.

It is in truth an utter solitude ;

Nor should I have made mention of this  
Dell

But for one object which you might pass  
by,

Might see and notice not. Beside the  
brook

Appears a straggling heap of unhewn  
stones !

And to that simple object appertains

A story—unenriched with strange events,

Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,  
Or for the summer shade. It was the  
first

Of those domestic tales that spake to me  
Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men  
Whom I already loved ; not verily  
For their own sakes, but for the fields and  
hills

Where was their occupation and abode.  
And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy  
Careless of books, yet having felt the power  
Of Nature, by the gentle agency  
Of natural objects, led me on to feel  
For passions that were not my own, and  
think

(At random and imperfectly indeed)



On man, the heart of man, and human life.

Therefore, although it be a history  
Homely and rude, I will relate the same  
For the delight of a few natural hearts ;  
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake  
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills  
Will be my second self when I am gone.

UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale  
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name ;

An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.

His bodily frame had been from youth to age

Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,  
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,  
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt  
And watchful more than ordinary men.

Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,

Of blasts of every tone ; and, oftentimes,  
When others heeded not, He heard the South

Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills,  
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock

Bethought him, and he to himself would say,

"The winds are now devising work for me!"  
And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives

The traveller to a shelter, summoned him  
Up to the mountains : he had been alone  
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
That came to him, and left him, on the heights.

So lived he till his eightieth year was past.  
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose

That the 'green valleys, and the streams  
and rocks,

Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.

Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed

The common air ; hills, which with vigorous step

He had so often climbed ; which had impressed

So many incidents upon his mind  
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;  
Which, like a book, preserved the memory

Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,  
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts  
The certainty of honourable gain ;  
Those fields, those hills—what could they less ? had laid

Strong hold on his affections, were to him  
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in single-ness,

His Helpmate was a comely matron, old—  
Though younger than himself full twenty years.

She was a woman of a stirring life,  
Whose heart was in her house : two wheels she had

Of antique form ; this large, for spinning wool ;

That small, for flax ; and if one wheel had rest

It was because the other was at work.  
The Pair had but one inmate in their house,  
An only Child, who had been born to them  
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began  
To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's phrase,

With one foot in the grave. This only Son,  
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,

The one of an inestimable worth,  
Made all their household. I may truly say,

That they were as a proverb in the vale  
For endless industry. When day was gone,  
And from their occupations out of doors  
The Son and Father were come home, even then,

Their labour did not cease ; unless when all  
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,

Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk,

Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,  
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the meal

Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)

And his old Father both betook themselves  
To such convenient work as might employ  
Their hands by the fireside ; perhaps to card

Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair  
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,  
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,

That in our ancient uncouth country style  
With huge and black projection overbrowed  
Large space beneath, as duly as the light  
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp ;

An aged utensil, which had performed  
Service beyond all others of its kind.  
Early at evening did it burn—and late,  
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,  
Which, going by from year to year, had found,

And left, the couple neither gay perhaps  
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,

Living a life of eager industry.

And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,

There by the light of this old lamp they sate,

Father and Son, while far into the night  
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,

Making the cottage through the silent hours  
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.  
This light was famous in its neighbourhood,  
And was a public symbol of the life  
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,

Their cottage on a plot of rising ground  
Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,

High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,  
And westward to the village near the lake ;  
And from this constant light, so regular  
And so far seen, the House itself, by all  
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,  
Both old and young, was named THE EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of years,

The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs

Have loved his Helpmate ; but to Michael's heart

This son of his old age was yet more dear—  
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same  
Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all—

Than that a child, more than all other gifts  
That earth can offer to declining man,  
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,

And stirrings of inquietude, when they  
By tendency of nature needs must fail.  
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,  
His heart and his heart's joy ! For oftentimes

Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,  
Had done him female service, not alone  
For pastime and delight, as is the use  
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced  
To acts of tenderness ; and he had rocked  
His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy  
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,  
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,  
To have the Young-one in his sight, when he

Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool

Sate with a fettered sheep before him stretched

Under the large old oak, that near his door  
Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade,

Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,

Thence in our rustic dialect was called  
The CLIPPING TREE,<sup>1</sup> a name which yet it bears.

There, while they two were sitting in the shade,

With others round them, earnest all and blithe,

Would Michael exercise his heart with looks  
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed  
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep  
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts  
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up

A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek  
Two steady roses that were five years old ;  
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut  
With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped

With iron, making it throughout in all  
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,  
And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equip  
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed  
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ;  
And, to his office prematurely called,  
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,

<sup>1</sup> Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing.

Something between a hindrance and a help ;  
 And for this cause not always, I believe,  
 Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;  
 Though nought was left undone which  
 staff, or voice,

Or looks, or threatening gestures, could  
 perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old,  
 could stand

Against the mountain blasts ; and to the  
 heights,

Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,  
 He with his Father daily went, and they  
 Were as companions, why should I relate  
 That objects which the Shepherd loved  
 before

Were dearer now ? that from the Boy there  
 came

Feelings and emanations—things which  
 were

Light to the sun and music to the wind ;  
 And that the old Man's heart seemed born  
 again ?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew  
 up :

And now, when he had reached his eighteenth  
 year,

He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household  
 lived

From day to day, to Michael's ear there  
 came

Distressful tidings. Long before the time  
 Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been  
 bound

In surety for his brother's son, a man  
 Of an industrious life, and ample means ;  
 But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly  
 Had prest upon him ; and old Michael now  
 Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,  
 A grievous penalty, but little less  
 Than half his substance. This unlooked-  
 for claim,

At the first hearing, for a moment took  
 More hope out of his life than he supposed  
 That any old man ever could have lost.

As soon as he had armed himself with  
 strength

To look his trouble in the face, it seemed  
 The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once  
 A portion of his patrimonial fields,

Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,  
 And his heart failed him. " Isabel," said

he,

Two evenings after he had heard the news,  
 " I have been toiling more than seventy  
 years,

And in the open sunshine of God's love  
 Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of ours  
 Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think  
 That I could not lie quiet in my grave.

Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself  
 Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;  
 And I have lived to be a fool at last  
 To my own family. An evil man

That was, and made an evil choice, if he  
 Were false to us ; and if he were not false,  
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like  
 this

Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ;—but  
 'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak  
 Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.

Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel ; the land  
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;  
 He shall possess it, free as is the wind

That passes over it. We have, thou  
 know'st,

Another kinsman—he will be our friend  
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,  
 Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall  
 go,

And with his kinsman's help and his own  
 thrift

He quickly will repair this loss, and then  
 He may return to us. If here he stay,  
 What can be done ? Where every one is  
 poor,

What can be gained ? "

At this the old Man paused,  
 And Isabel sat silent, for her mind  
 Was busy, looking back into past times.

There's Richard Bateman, thought she to  
 herself,

He was a parish-boy—at the church-door  
 They made a gathering for him, shillings,  
 pence

And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbours  
 bought

A basket, which they filled with pedlar's  
 wares ;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad  
 Went up to London, found a master there,  
 Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy  
 To go and overlook his merchandise  
 Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous  
 rich,

And left estates and monies to the poor,

And, at his birth-place, built a chapel,  
floored

With marble which he sent from foreign  
lands.

These thoughts, and many others of like  
sort,

Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,  
And her face brightened. The old Man  
was glad,

And thus resumed :—" Well, Isabel ! this  
scheme

These two days, has been meat and drink  
to me,

Far more than we have lost is left us yet.

—We have enough—I wish indeed that I  
Were younger;—but this hope is a good  
hope.

—Make ready Luke's best garments, of the  
best

Buy for him more, and let us send him forth  
To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night :

—If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-  
night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields  
went forth

With a light heart. The Housewife for  
five days

Was restless morn and night, and all day  
long

Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare  
Things needful for the journey of her son.

But Isabel was glad when Sunday came  
To stop her in her work : for, when she lay  
By Michael's side, she through the last two  
nights

Heard him, how he was troubled in his  
sleep :

And when they rose at morning she could  
see

That all his hopes were gone. That day  
at noon

She said to Luke, while they two by them-  
selves

Were sitting at the door, " Thou must not  
go :

We have no other Child but thee to lose

None to remember—do not go away,

For if thou leave thy Father he will die."

The Youth made answer with a jocund  
voice ;

And Isabel, when she had told her fears,  
Recovered heart. That evening her best  
fare

Did she bring forth, and all together sat

Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work ;

And all the ensuing week the house appeared

As cheerful as a grove in Spring : at length

The expected letter from their kinsman  
came,

With kind assurances that he would do

His utmost for the welfare of the Boy ;

To which, requests were added, that forth-  
with

He might be sent to him. Ten times or  
more

The letter was read over ; Isabel

Went forth to show it to the neighbours  
round ;

Nor was there at that time on English land

A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel

Had to her house returned, the old Man  
said,

" He shall depart to-morrow." To this  
word

The Housewife answered, talking much of  
things

Which, if at such short notice he should  
go,

Would surely be forgotten. But at length  
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Greenhead  
Ghyll,

In that deep valley, Michael had designed

To build a Sheepfold ; and, before he heard

The tidings of his melancholy loss,

For this same purpose he had gathered up

A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's  
edge

Lay thrown together, ready for the work.

With Luke that evening thitherward he  
walked :

And soon as they had reached the place he  
stopped,

And thus the old Man spake to him :—

" My Son,

To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full  
heart

I look upon thee, for thou art the same

That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,

And all thy life hast been my daily joy.

I will relate to thee some little part

Of our two histories ; 'twill do thee good

When thou art from me, even if I should  
touch

On things thou canst not know of.—

After thou

First cam'st into the world—as oft befalls

To new-born infants—thou didst sleep  
 away  
 Two days, and blessings from thy Father's  
 tongue  
 Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed  
 on,  
 And still I loved thee with increasing love,  
 Never to living ear came sweeter sounds  
 Than when I heard thee by our own fire-  
 side  
 First uttering, without words, a natural  
 tune ;  
 While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy  
 joy  
 Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month fol-  
 lowed month,  
 And in the open fields my life was passed  
 And on the mountains ; else I think that  
 thou  
 Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's  
 knees,  
 But we were playmates, Luke : among  
 these hills,  
 As well thou knowest, in us the old and  
 young  
 Have played together, nor with me didst  
 thou  
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."  
 Luke had a manly heart ; but at these  
 words  
 He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped  
 his hand,  
 And said, " Nay, do not take it so—I see  
 That these are things of which I need not  
 speak.  
 —Even to the utmost I have been to thee  
 A kind and a good Father : and herein  
 I but repay a gift which I myself  
 Received at others' hands ; for, though  
 now old  
 Beyond the common life of man, I still  
 Remember them who loved me in my youth,  
 Both of them sleep together : here they  
 lived,  
 As all their Forefathers had done ; and  
 when  
 At length their time was come, they were  
 not loth  
 To give their bodies to the family mould.  
 I wished that thou should'st live the life  
 they lived :  
 But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,  
 And see so little gain from threescore  
 years.

These fields were burthened when they  
 came to me ;  
 Till I was forty years of age, not more  
 Than half of my inheritance was mine.  
 I toiled and toiled ; God blessed me in my  
 work,  
 And till these three weeks past the land  
 was free.  
 —It looks as if it never could endure  
 Another Master. Heaven forgive me,  
 Luke,  
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good  
 That thou should'st go."  
 At this the old Man paused ;  
 Then, pointing to the stones near which  
 they stood,  
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :  
 " This was a work for us ; and now, my  
 Son,  
 It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—  
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own  
 hands.  
 Nay, Boy, be of good hope ;—we both may  
 live  
 To see a better day. At eighty-four  
 I still am strong and hale ;—do thou thy  
 part ;  
 I will do mine.—I will begin again  
 With many tasks that were resigned to  
 thee :  
 Up to the heights, and in among the  
 storms,  
 Will I without thee go again, and do  
 All works which I was wont to do alone,  
 Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless  
 thee, Boy !  
 Thy heart these two weeks has been beat-  
 ing fast  
 With many hopes ; it should be so—yes—  
 yes—  
 I knew that thou could'st never have a wish  
 To leave me, Luke : thou hast been bound  
 to me  
 Only by links of love : when thou art gone,  
 What will be left to us !—But, I forget  
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,  
 As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,  
 When thou art gone away, should evil men  
 Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,  
 And of this moment ; hither turn thy  
 thoughts,  
 And God will strengthen thee : amid all  
 fear  
 And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou

May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers  
lived,

Who, being innocent, did for that cause  
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee  
well—

When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt  
see

A work which is not here : a covenant  
'Twill be between us ; but, whatever fate  
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,  
And bear thy memory with me to the  
grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke  
stooped down,

And, as his Father had requested, laid  
The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the  
sight

The old Man's grief broke from him ; to  
his heart

He pressed his Son, he kissèd him and  
wept ;

And to the house together they returned.

—Hushed was that House in peace, or  
seeming peace,

Ere the night fell :—with morrow's dawn  
the Boy

Began his journey, and when he had reached  
The public way, he put on a bold face ;

And all the neighbours, as he passed their  
doors,

Came forth with wishes and with farewell  
prayers,

That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their Kinsman  
come,

Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy  
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,  
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were  
throughout

"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."  
Both parents read them with rejoicing  
hearts.

So, many months passed on : and once  
again

The Shepherd went about his daily work  
With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and  
now

Sometimes when he could find a leisure  
hour

He to that valley took his way, and there  
Wrought at the Sheepfold. Meantime

Luke began

To slacken in his duty ; and, at length,  
He in the dissolute city gave himself

To evil courses : ignominy and shame  
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last  
To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of  
love ;

'Twill make a thing enduring, which else  
Would overset the brain, or break the  
heart :

I have conversed with more than one who  
well

Remember the old Man, and what he was  
Years after he had heard this heavy news.  
His bodily frame had been from youth to  
age

Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks  
He went, and still looked up to sun and  
cloud,

And listened to the wind ; and, as before,  
Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,  
And for the land, his small inheritance.

And to that hollow dell from time to time  
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which  
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet

The pity which was then in every heart  
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all

That many and many a day he thither  
went,

And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes was  
he seen

Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog.  
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.

The length of full seven years, from time to  
time,

He at the building of this Sheepfold  
wrought,

And left the work unfinished when he died.  
Three years, or little more, did Isabel

Survive her Husband : at her death the  
estate

Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.  
The Cottage which was named the EVEN-

ING STAR

Is gone—the ploughshare has been through  
the ground

On which it stood ; great changes have  
been wrought

In all the neighbourhood :—yet the oak is  
left

That grew beside their door ; and the re-  
mains

Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen  
Beside the boisterous brook of Greenhead  
Ghyll, 1800.

## THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS ;

OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE <sup>1</sup>

## A PASTORAL

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I will only add a little monitory anecdote concerning this subject. When Coleridge and Southey were walking together upon the Fells, Southey observed that, if I wished to be considered a faithful painter of rural manners, I ought not to have said that my Shepherd-boys trimmed their rustic hats as described in the poem. Just as the words had passed his lips two boys appeared with the very plant entwined round their hats. I have often wondered that Southey, who rambled so much about the mountains, should have fallen into this mistake, and I record it as a warning for others who, with far less opportunity than my dear friend had of knowing what things are, and far less sagacity, give way to presumptuous criticism, from which he was free, though in this matter mistaken. In describing a tarn under Helvellyn, I say—

“There sometimes doth a leaping fish  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer.”

This was branded by a critic of these days, in a review ascribed to Mrs. Barbauld, as unnatural and absurd. I admire the genius of Mrs. Barbauld, and am certain that, had her education been favourable to imaginative influences, no female of her day would have been more likely to sympathise with that image, and to acknowledge the truth of the sentiment.

THE valley rings with mirth and joy ;  
Among the hills the echoes play  
A never never ending song,  
To welcome in the May.  
The magpie chatters with delight ;  
The mountain raven's youngling brood  
Have left the mother and the nest ;  
And they go rambling east and west  
In search of their own food ;  
Or through the glittering vapours dart  
In very wantonness of heart.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,  
Two boys are sitting in the sun ;

<sup>1</sup> *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, is a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall.

Their work, if any work they have,  
Is out of mind—or done.  
On pipes of sycamore they play  
The fragments of a Christmas hymn ;  
Or with that plant which in our dale  
We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,  
Their rusty hats they trim :  
And thus, as happy as the day,  
Those Shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge  
The sand-lark chants a joyous song ;  
The thrush is busy in the wood,  
And carols loud and strong.  
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,  
All newly born ! both earth and sky  
Keep jubilee, and more than all,  
Those boys with their green coronal ;  
They never hear the cry,  
That plaintive cry ! which up the hill  
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,  
“Down to the stump of yon old yew  
We'll for our whistles run a race.”

—Away the shepherds flew ;  
They leapt—they ran—and when they came  
Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,  
Seeing that he should lose the prize,  
“Stop !” to his comrade Walter cries—  
James stopped with no good will :  
Said Walter then, exulting ; “Here  
You'll find a task for half a year.

“Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—  
Come on, and tread where I shall tread.”  
The other took him at his word,  
And followed as he led.  
It was a spot which you may see  
If ever you to Langdale go ;  
Into a chasm a mighty block  
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock :  
The gulf is deep below ;  
And, in a basin black and small,  
Receives a lofty waterfall.

With staff in hand across the cleft  
The challenger pursued his march ;  
And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained  
The middle of the arch.  
When list ! he hears a piteous moan—  
Again !—his heart within him dies—  
His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,  
He totters, pallid as a ghost,

And, looking down, espies  
A lamb, that in the pool is pent  
Within that black and frightful rent.

The lamb had slipped into the stream,  
And safe without a bruise or wound  
The cataract had borne him down  
Into the gulf profound.  
His dam had seen him when he fell,  
She saw him down the torrent borne;  
And, while with all a mother's love  
She from the lofty rocks above  
Sent forth a cry forlorn,  
The lamb, still swimming round and round,  
Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,  
That sent this rueful cry; I ween  
The Boy recovered heart, and told  
The sight which he had seen.  
Both gladly now deferred their task;  
Nor was there wanting other aid—  
A Poet, one who loves the brooks  
Far better than the sages' books,  
By chance had thither strayed;  
And there the helpless lamb he found  
By those huge rocks encompassed round.

He drew it from the troubled pool,  
And brought it forth into the light:  
The Shepherds met him with his charge,  
An unexpected sight!  
Into their arms the lamb they took,  
Whose life and limbs the flood had spared;  
Then up the steep ascent they hied,  
And placed him at his mother's side;  
And gently did the Bard  
Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,  
And bade them better mind their trade.

1800.

## THE PET-LAMB

## A PASTORAL

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Barbara Lewthwaite, now living at Ambleside (1843), though much changed as to beauty, was one of two most lovely sisters. Almost the first words my poor brother John said, when he visited us for the first time at Grasmere, were, "Were those two Angels that I have just seen?" and from his description I have no doubt they were those two sisters. The mother died in childhood; and one of our neighbours at Grasmere told me that the

loveliest sight she had ever seen was that mother as she lay in her coffin with her babe in her arm. I mention this to notice what I cannot but think a salutary custom once universal in these vales. Every attendant on a funeral made it a duty to look at the corpse in the coffin before the lid was closed, which was never done (nor I believe is now) till a minute or two before the corpse was removed. Barbara Lewthwaite was not in fact the child whom I had seen and overheard as described in the poem. I chose the name for reasons implied in the above; and will here add a caution against the use of names of living persons. Within a few months after the publication of this poem, I was much surprised, and more hurt, to find it in a child's school-book which, having been compiled by Lindley Murray, had come into use at Grasmere School where Barbara was a pupil; and, alas! I had the mortification of hearing that she was very vain of being thus distinguished; and, in after-life, she used to say that she remembered the incident and what I said to her upon the occasion.

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began  
to blink;  
I heard a voice; it said, "Drink, pretty  
creature, drink!"  
And, looking o'er the hedge, before me I  
espied  
A snow-white mountain-lamb with a Maiden  
at its side.

Nor sheep nor kine were near; the lamb  
was all alone,  
And by a slender cord was tethered to a  
stone;  
With one knee on the grass did the little  
Maiden kneel,  
While to that mountain-lamb she gave its  
evening meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus his  
supper took,  
Seemed to feast with head and ears; and  
his tail with pleasure shook.  
"Drink, pretty creature, drink," she said  
in such a tone  
That I almost received her heart into my  
own.

'Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of  
beauty rare!  
I watched them with delight, they were a  
lovely pair.  
Now with her empty can the Maiden turned  
away:



But ere ten yards were gone her footsteps  
did she stay.

Right towards the lamb she looked ; and  
from a shady place  
I unobserved could see the workings of her  
face :

If Nature to her tongue could measured  
numbers bring,  
Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little  
Maid might sing :

" What ails thee, young One ? what ? Why  
pull so at thy cord ?  
Is it not well with thee ? well both for bed  
and board ?  
Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass  
can be ;  
Rest, little young One, rest ; what is't that  
aileth thee ?

" What is it thou wouldst seek ? What is  
wanting to thy heart ?  
Thy limbs are they not strong ? And  
beautiful thou art :  
This grass is tender grass ; these flowers  
they have no peers ;  
And that green corn all day is rustling in  
thy ears !

" If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch  
thy woollen chain,  
This beech is standing by, its covert thou  
canst gain ;  
For rain and mountain-storms ! the like  
thou need'st not fear,  
The rain and storm are things that scarcely  
can come here.

" Rest, little young One, rest ; thou hast  
forgot the day  
When my father found thee first in places  
far away ;  
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou  
wert owned by none,  
And thy mother from thy side for evermore  
was gone.

" He took thee in his arms, and in pity  
brought thee home :  
A blessed day for thee ! then whither  
wouldst thou roam ?  
A faithful nurse thou hast ; the dam that  
did thee yearn

Upon the mountain-tops no kinder could  
have been.

" Thou know'st that twice a day I have  
brought thee in this can  
Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever  
ran ;  
And twice in the day, when the ground is  
wet with dew,  
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk  
it is and new.

" Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as  
they are now,  
Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony  
in the plough ;  
My playmate thou shalt be ; and when the  
wind is cold  
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall  
be thy fold.

" It will not, will not rest !—Poor creature,  
can it be  
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is work-  
ing so in thee ?  
Things that I know not of belike to thee are  
dear,  
And dreams of things which thou canst  
neither see nor hear.

" Alas, the mountain-tops that look so green  
and fair !  
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness  
that come there ;  
The little brooks that seem all pastime and  
all play,  
When they are angry, roar like lions for  
their prey.

" Here thou need'st not dread the raven in  
the sky ;  
Night and day thou art safe,—our cottage  
is hard by.  
Why bleat so after me ? Why pull so at  
thy chain ?  
Sleep—and at break of day I will come to  
thee again !"

—As homeward through the lane I went  
with lazy feet,  
This song to myself did I oftentimes repeat ;  
And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line  
by line,

That but half of it was hers, and one half  
of it was *mine*.

Again, and once again, did I repeat the  
song;

"Nay," said I, "more than half to the  
damsel must belong,

For she looked with such a look and she  
spake with such a tone,

That I almost received her heart into my  
own." 1800.

## POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES

### ADVERTISEMENT

By persons resident in the country and attached to rural objects, many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little Incidents must have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to give some sort of record to such Incidents, and renew the gratification of such feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

#### I

Written at Grasmere. This poem was suggested on the banks of the brook that runs through Easedale, which is, in some parts of its course, as wild and beautiful as brook can be. I have composed thousands of verses by the side of it.

It was an April morning: fresh and clear  
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,  
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet  
the voice

Of waters which the winter had supplied  
Was softened down into a vernal tone.  
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,  
And hopes and wishes, from all living  
things

Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.  
The budding groves seemed eager to urge  
on

The steps of June; as if their various hues  
Were only hindrances that stood between  
Them and their object: but, meanwhile,  
prevailed

Such an entire contentment in the air  
That every naked ash, and tardy tree

Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance  
With which it looked on this delightful day  
Were native to the summer.—Up the brook  
I roamed in the confusion of my heart,  
Alive to all things and forgetting all.  
At length I to a sudden turning came  
In this continuous glen, where down a rock  
The Stream, so ardent in its course before,  
Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that  
all

Which I till then had heard, appeared the  
voice

Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the  
lamb,

The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the  
thrush

Vied with this waterfall, and made a song.  
Which, while I listened, seemed like the  
wild growth

Or like some natural produce of the air,  
That could not cease to be. Green leaves  
were here;

But 'twas the foliage of the rocks—the birch,  
The yew, the holly, and the bright green  
thorn,

With hanging islands of resplendent furze:  
And, on a summit, distant a short space,

By any who should look beyond the dell,  
A single mountain-cottage might be seen.  
I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,

"Our thoughts at least are ours; and this  
wild nook,

My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee."

—Soon did the spot become my other  
home,

My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.  
And, of the Shepherds who have seen me  
there,

To whom I sometimes in our idle talk  
Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,  
Years after we are gone and in our graves,  
When they have cause to speak of this wild  
place,

May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.  
1800.

#### II

### TO JOANNA

Written at Grasmere. The effect of her laugh is an extravagance; though the effect of the reverberation of voices in some parts of the mountains is very striking. There is, in the "Excursion," an allusion to the bleat of a lamb thus re-echoed, and described without any ex-

aggregation, as I heard it, on the side of Stickle Tarn, from the precipice that stretches on to Langdale Pikes.

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass  
The time of early youth; and there you  
learned,

From years of quiet industry, to love  
The living Beings by your own fireside,  
With such a strong devotion, that your  
heart

Is slow to meet the sympathies of them  
Who look upon the hills with tenderness,  
And make dear friendships with the streams  
and groves.

Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,  
Dwelling retired in our simplicity  
Among the woods and fields, we love you  
well,

Joanna! and I guess, since you have been  
So distant from us now for two long years,  
That you will gladly listen to discourse,  
However trivial, if you thence be taught  
That they, with whom you once were  
happy, talk

Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten days  
past,

Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop  
Their ancient neighbour, the old steeple-  
tower,

The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by  
Came forth to greet me; and when he had  
asked,

"How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted  
Maid!

And when will she return to us?" he  
paused;

And, after short exchange of village news,  
He with grave looks demanded, for what  
cause,

Reviving obsolete idolatry,  
I, like a Runic Priest, in characters  
Of formidable size had chiselled out  
Some uncouth name upon the native rock,  
Above the Rotha, by the forest-side.

—Now, by those dear immunities of heart  
Engendered between malice and true love,  
I was not loth to be so catechised,  
And this was my reply:—"As it befell,  
One summer morning we had walked abroad  
At break of day, Joanna and myself.

—"Twas that delightful season when the  
broom,

Full-flowered, and visible on every steep,

Along the copses runs in veins of gold.  
Our pathway led us on to Rotha's banks;  
And when we came in front of that tall rock  
That eastward looks, I there stopped short  
—and stood

Tracing the lofty barrier with my eye  
From base to summit; such delight I found  
To note in shrub and tree, in stone and  
flower

That intermixture of delicious hues,  
Along so vast a surface, all at once,  
In one impression, by connecting force  
Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart.  
—When I had gazed perhaps two minutes'  
space,

Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld  
That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.  
The Rock, like something starting from a  
sleep,

Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed  
again;

That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag  
Was ready with her cavern; Hammar-scar,  
And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent forth  
A noise of laughter; southern Loughrigg  
heard,

And Fairfield answered with a mountain  
tone;

Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky  
Carried the Lady's voice,—old Skiddaw  
blew

His speaking-trumpet;—back out of the  
clouds

Of Glaramara southward came the voice;  
And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head.  
—Now whether (said I to our cordial  
Friend,

Who in the hey-day of astonishment  
Smiled in my face) this were in simple truth  
A work accomplished by the brotherhood  
Of ancient mountains, or my ear was  
touched

With dreams and visionary impulses  
To me alone imparted, sure I am  
That there was a loud uproar in the hills.  
And, while we both were listening, to my  
side

The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished  
To shelter from some object of her fear.  
—And hence, long afterwards, when eighteen  
moons

Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone  
Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm  
And silent morning, I sat down, and there,

In memory of affections old and true,  
I chiselled out in those rude characters  
Joanna's name deep in the living stone:—  
And I, and all who dwell by my fireside,  
Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S  
ROCK." 1800.

NOTE.—In Cumberland and Westmoreland are several Inscriptions, upon the native rock, which, from the wasting of time, and the rudeness of the workmanship, have been mistaken for Runic. They are without doubt Roman.

The Rotha, mentioned in this poem, is the River which, flowing through the lakes of Grasmere and Rydale, falls into Wynandermere. On Helm-crag, that impressive single mountain at the head of the Vale of Grasmere, is a rock which from most points of view bears a striking resemblance to an old Woman cowering. Close by this rock is one of those fissures or caverns, which in the language of the country are called dungeons. Most of the mountains here mentioned immediately surround the Vale of Grasmere; of the others, some are at a considerable distance, but they belong to the same cluster.

## III

It is not accurate that the Eminence here alluded to could be seen from our orchard-seat. It rises above the road by the side of Grasmere lake, towards Keswick, and its name is Stone-Arthur.

THERE is an Eminence,—of these our hills  
The last that parleys with the setting sun ;  
We can behold it from our orchard-seat ;  
And, when at evening we pursue our walk  
Along the public way, this Peak, so high  
Above us, and so distant in its height,  
Is visible ; and often seems to send  
Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.  
The meteors make of it a favourite haunt :  
The star of Jove, so beautiful and large  
In the mid heavens, is never half so fair  
As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth  
The loneliest place we have among the  
clouds,

And She who dwells with me, whom I have  
loved  
With such communion, that no place on  
earth  
Can ever be a solitude to me,  
Hath to this lonely Summit given my  
Name.

1800.

## IV

The character of the eastern shore of Grasmere lake is quite changed, since these verses were written, by the public road being carried along its side. The friends spoken of were Coleridge and my Sister, and the facts occurred strictly as recorded.

A NARROW girdle of rough stones and  
crags,

A rude and natural causeway, interposed  
Between the water and a winding slope  
Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern  
shore

Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy :  
And there myself and two beloved Friends,  
One calm September morning, ere the mist  
Had altogether yielded to the sun,  
Sauntered on this retired and difficult way.

—Ill suits the road with one in haste ;  
but we

Played with our time ; and, as we strolled  
along,

It was our occupation to observe  
Such objects as the waves had tossed  
ashore—

Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered  
bough,

Each on the other heaped, along the line  
Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant  
mood,

Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft  
Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,  
That skimmed the surface of the dead calm  
lake,

Suddenly halting now—a lifeless stand !  
And starting off again with freak as sudden ;  
In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,  
Making report of an invisible breeze  
That was its wings, its chariot, and its  
horse,

Its playmate, rather say, its moving soul.

—And often, trifling with a privilege  
Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now,  
And now the other, to point out, perchance  
To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too  
fair

Either to be divided from the place  
On which it grew, or to be left alone  
To its own beauty. Many such there are,  
Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that tall  
fern,

So stately, of the queen Osmunda named ;  
Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode

On Grasmere's beach, than Naiad by the  
side

Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,  
Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.  
—So fared we that bright morning : from  
the fields

Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy  
mirth

Of reapers, men and women, boys and girls.  
Delighted much to listen to those sounds,  
And feeding thus our fancies, we advanced  
Along the indented shore ; when suddenly,  
Through a thin veil of glittering haze was  
seen

Before us, on a point of jutting land,  
The tall and upright figure of a Man  
Attired in peasant's garb, who stood alone,  
Angling beside the margin of the lake.

"Improvident and reckless," we exclaimed,  
"The Man must be, who thus can lose a  
day

Of the mid harvest, when the labourer's  
hire

Is ample, and some little might be stored  
Wherewith to cheer him in the winter time."  
Thus talking of that Peasant, we approached  
Close to the spot where with his rod and  
line

He stood alone ; whereat he turned his  
head

To greet us—and we saw a Man worn  
down

By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken  
cheeks

And wasted limbs, his legs so long and  
lean

That for my single self I looked at them,  
Forgetful of the body they sustained.—  
Too weak to labour in the harvest field,  
The Man was using his best skill to gain  
A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake  
That knew not of his wants. I will not  
say

What thoughts immediately were ours, nor  
how

The happy idleness of that sweet morn,  
With all its lovely images, was changed  
To serious musing and to self-reproach.  
Nor did we fail to see within ourselves  
What need there is to be reserved in speech,  
And temper all our thoughts with charity.  
—Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,  
My Friend, Myself, and She who then  
received

The same admonishment, have called the  
place

By a memorial name, uncouth indeed  
As e'er by mariner was given to bay  
Or foreland, on a new-discovered coast ;  
And POINT RASH-JUDGMENT is the name  
it bears.

1800.

v

TO M. H.

The pool alluded to is in Rydal Upper Park.

OUR walk was far among the ancient trees :  
There was no road, nor any woodman's  
path ;

But a thick umbrage—checking the wild  
growth

Of weed and sapling, along soft green turf  
Beneath the branches—of itself had made  
A track, that brought us to a slip of lawn,  
And a small bed of water in the woods.  
All round this pool both flocks and herds  
might drink

On its firm margin, even as from a well,  
Or some stone-basin which the herdsman's  
hand

Had shaped for their refreshment ; nor did  
sun,

Or wind from any quarter, ever come,  
But as a blessing to this calm recess,  
This glade of water and this one green  
field.

The spot was made by Nature for herself ;  
The travellers know it not, and 'twill  
remain

Unknown to them ; but it is beautiful ;  
And if a man should plant his cottage near,  
Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,  
And blend its waters with his daily meal,  
He would so love it, that in his death-hour  
Its image would survive among his thoughts :  
And therefore, my sweet MARY, this still

Nook,

With all its beeches, we have named from  
You !

1800.

#### THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE

Suggested nearer to Grasmere, on the same  
mountain track as that referred to in the following  
Note. The Eglington remained many years after-  
wards, but is now gone.

## I

"BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous Elf,"  
Exclaimed an angry Voice,  
"Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self  
Between me and my choice!"  
A small Cascade fresh swoln with snows  
Thus threatened a poor Briar-rose,  
That, all bespattered with his foam,  
And dancing high and dancing low,  
Was living, as a child might know,  
In an unhappy home.

## II

"Dost thou presume my course to block?  
Off, off! or, puny Thing!  
I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock  
To which thy fibres cling."  
The Flood was tyrannous and strong;  
The patient Briar suffered long,  
Nor did he utter groan or sigh,  
Hoping the danger would be past;  
But, seeing no relief, at last,  
He ventured to reply.

## III

"Ah!" said the Briar, "blame me not;  
Why should we dwell in strife?  
We who in this sequestered spot  
Once lived a happy life!  
You stirred me on my rocky bed—  
What pleasure through my veins you  
spread  
The summer long, from day to day,  
My leaves you freshened and bedewed;  
Nor was it common gratitude  
That did your cares repay.

## IV

"When spring came on with bud and bell,  
Among these rocks did I  
Before you hang my wreaths to tell  
That gentle days were nigh!  
And in the sultry summer hours,  
I sheltered you with leaves and flowers;  
And in my leaves—now shed and gone,  
The linnet lodged, and for us two  
Chanted his pretty songs, when you  
Had little voice or none.

## V

"But now proud thoughts are in your  
breast—  
What grief is mine you see,

Ah! would you think, even yet how blest  
Together we might be!  
Though of both leaf and flower bereft,  
Some ornaments to me are left—  
Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,  
With which I, in my humble way,  
Would deck you many a winter day,  
A happy Eglantine!"

## VI

What more he said I cannot tell,  
The Torrent down the rocky dell  
Came thundering loud and fast;  
I listened, nor aught else could hear;  
The Briar quaked—and much I fear  
Those accents were his last. 1800.

## THE OAK AND THE BROOM

## A PASTORAL.

Suggested upon the mountain pathway that  
leads from Upper Rydal to Grasmere. The pon-  
derous block of stone which is mentioned in the  
poem remains, I believe, to this day, a good way  
up Nab-Scar. Broom grows under it, and in  
many places on the side of the precipice.

## I

His simple truths did Andrew glean  
Beside the babbling rills;  
A careful student he had been  
Among the woods and hills.  
One winter's night, when through the trees  
The wind was roaring, on his knees  
His youngest born did Andrew hold:  
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,  
Were seated round their blazing fire,  
This Tale the Shepherd told.

## II

"I saw a crag, a lofty stone  
As ever tempest beat!  
Out of its head an Oak had grown,  
A Broom out of its feet.  
The time was March, a cheerful noon—  
The thaw-wind, with the breath of June,  
Breathed gently from the warm south-west:  
When, in a voice sedate with age,  
This Oak, a giant and a sage,  
His neighbour thus addressed:—

## L

## III

“ ‘Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,  
 Along this mountain's edge,  
 The Frost hath wrought both night and day,  
 Wedge driving after wedge.  
 Look up ! and think, above your head  
 What trouble, surely, will be bred ;  
 Last night I heard a crash—'tis true,  
 The splinters took another road—  
 I see them yonder—what a load  
 For such a Thing as you !

## IV

“ ‘You are preparing as before,  
 To deck your slender shape ;  
 And yet, just three years back—no more—  
 You had a strange escape :  
 Down from yon cliff a fragment broke ;  
 It thundered down, with fire and smoke,  
 And hitherward pursued its way ;  
 This ponderous block was caught by me,  
 And o'er your head, as you may see,  
 'Tis hanging to this day !

## V

“ ‘If breeze or bird to this rough steep  
 Your kind's first seed did bear ;  
 The breeze had better been asleep,  
 The bird caught in a snare :  
 For you and your green twigs decoy  
 The little witless shepherd-boy  
 To come and slumber in your bower ;  
 And, trust me, on some sultry noon,  
 Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon !  
 Will perish in one hour.

## VI

“ ‘From me this friendly warning take'—  
 The Broom began to doze,  
 And thus, to keep herself awake,  
 Did gently interpose :  
 'My thanks for your discourse are due ;  
 That more than what you say is true,  
 I know, and I have known it long ;  
 Frail is the bond by which we hold  
 Our being, whether young or old,  
 Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

## VII

“ ‘Disasters, do the best we can,  
 Will reach both great and small ;

And he is oft the wisest man,  
 Who is not wise at all.  
 For me, why should I wish to roam ?  
 This spot is my paternal home,  
 It is my pleasant heritage ;  
 My father many a happy year,  
 Spread here his careless blossoms, here  
 Attained a good old age.

## VIII

“ ‘Even such as his may be my lot.  
 What cause have I to haunt  
 My heart with terrors ? Am I not  
 In truth a favoured plant !  
 On me such bounty Summer pours,  
 That I am covered o'er with flowers ;  
 And, when the Frost is in the sky,  
 My branches are so fresh and gay  
 That you might look at me and say,  
 This Plant can never die.

## IX

“ ‘The butterfly, all green and gold,  
 To me hath often flown,  
 Here in my blossoms to behold  
 Wings lovely as his own.  
 When grass is chill with rain or dew,  
 Beneath my shade, the mother-ewe  
 Lies with her infant lamb ; I see  
 The love they to each other make,  
 And the sweet joy which they partake,  
 It is a joy to me.'

## X

“ ‘Her voice was blithe, her heart was light ;  
 The Broom might have pursued  
 Her speech, until the stars of night  
 Their journey had renewed ;  
 But in the branches of the oak  
 Two ravens now began to croak  
 Their nuptial song, a gladsome air ;  
 And to her own green bower the breeze  
 That instant brought two stripling bees  
 To rest, or murmur there.

## XI

“ ‘One night, my Children ! from the north  
 There came a furious blast ;  
 At break of day I ventured forth,  
 And near the cliff I passed.  
 The storm had fallen upon the Oak,  
 And struck him with a mighty stroke

And whirled, and whirled him far away ;  
 And, in one hospitable cleft,  
 The little careless Broom was left  
 To live for many a day." 1800.

## HART-LEAP WELL

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The first eight stanzas were composed extempore one winter evening in the cottage ; when, after having tired myself with labouring at an awkward passage in "The Brothers," I started with a sudden impulse to this to get rid of the other, and finished it in a day or two. My Sister and I had past the place a few weeks before in our wild winter journey from Sockburn on the banks of the Tees to Grasmere. A peasant whom we met near the spot told us the story so far as concerned the name of the Well, and the Hart, and pointed out the Stones. Both the Stones and the Well are objects that may easily be missed ; the tradition by this time may be extinct in the neighbourhood : the man who related it to us was very old.

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

THE Knight had ridden down from  
 Wensley Moor

With the slow motion of a summer's cloud,  
 And now, as he approached a vassal's door,  
 "Bring forth another horse !" he cried aloud.

"Another horse !" — That shout the vassal  
 heard

And saddled his best Steed, a comely grey ;  
 Sir Walter mounted him ; he was the third  
 Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes ;  
 The horse and horseman are a happy pair ;  
 But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,  
 There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,  
 That as they galloped made the echoes roar ;  
 But horse and man are vanished, one and  
 all ;  
 Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,  
 Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain :  
 Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their  
 kind,  
 Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and chid  
 them on  
 With suppliant gestures and upbraidings  
 stern ;

But breath and eyesight fail ; and, one by  
 one,  
 The dogs are stretched among the mountain  
 fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the  
 race ?

The bugles that so joyfully were blown ?  
 — This chase it looks not like an earthly  
 chase ;

Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.

The poor Hart toils along the mountain-  
 side ;

I will not stop to tell how far he fled,  
 Nor will I mention by what death he died ;  
 But now the Knight beholds him lying  
 dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a  
 thorn ;

He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy :  
 He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his  
 horn,  
 But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter  
 leaned,

Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat ;  
 Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned ;  
 And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet.

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretched :  
 His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,  
 And with the last deep groan his breath  
 had fetched

The waters of the spring were trembling  
 still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,  
 (Never had living man such joyful lot !)  
 Sir Walter walked all round, north, south,  
 and west,  
 And gazed and gazed upon that darling  
 spot.



And climbing up the hill—(it was at least  
Four roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found  
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted  
Beast  
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, "Till  
now  
Such sight was never seen by human eyes :  
Three-leaps have borne him from this lofty  
brow,  
Down to the very fountain where he lies.

"I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,  
And a small harbour, made for rural joy ;  
'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's  
cot,  
A place of love for damsels that are coy.

"A cunning artist will I have to frame  
A basin for that fountain in the dell !  
And they who do make mention of the  
same,  
From this day forth, shall call it HART-  
LEAP WELL.

"And, gallant Stag! to make thy praises  
known,  
Another monument shall here be raised ;  
Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn  
stone,  
And planted where thy hoofs the turf have  
grazed.

"And, in the summer-time when days are  
long,  
I will come hither with my Paramour ;  
And with the dancers and the minstrel's  
song  
We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

"Till the foundations of the mountains  
fail  
My mansion with its harbour shall endure ;—  
The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,  
And them who dwell among the woods of  
Ure!"

Then home he went, and left the Hart,  
stone-dead,  
With breathless nostrils stretched above the  
spring.  
—Soon did the Knight perform what he  
had said ;  
And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere thrice the Moon into her port had  
steered,  
A cup of stone received the living well ;  
Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,  
And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature  
tall  
With trailing plants and trees were inter-  
twined,—  
Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,  
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were  
long,  
Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour ;  
And with the dancers and the minstrel's  
song  
Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of  
time,  
And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—  
But there is matter for a second rhyme,  
And I to this would add another tale.

#### PART SECOND

THE moving accident is not my trade ;  
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :  
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,  
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,  
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell  
Three aspens at three corners of a square ;  
And one, not four yards distant, near a  
well.

What this imported I could ill divine :  
And, pulling now the rein my horse to  
stop,  
I saw three pillars standing in a line,—  
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms nor  
head ;  
Half wasted the square mound of tawny  
green ;  
So that you just might say, as then I said,  
"Here in old time the hand of man hath  
been."

I looked upon the hill both far and near,  
More doleful place did never eye survey;  
It seemed as if the spring-time came not  
here,  
And Nature here were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,  
When one, who was in shepherd's garb  
attired,  
Came up the hollow :—him did I accost,  
And what this place might be I then  
inquired.

The Shepherd stopped, and that same story  
told

Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.  
"A jolly place," said he, "in times of old !  
But something ails it now : the spot is curst.

"You see these lifeless stumps of aspen  
wood—

Some say that they are beeches, others elms—  
These were the bower ; and here a mansion  
stood,  
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

"The arbour does its own condition tell ;  
You see the stones, the fountain, and the  
stream ;  
But as to the great Lodge ! you might as  
well  
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

"There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor  
sheep,  
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone ;  
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,  
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

"Some say that here a murder has been  
done,  
And blood cries out for blood : but, for my  
part,  
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in the  
sun,  
That it was all for that unhappy Hart.

"What thoughts must through the crea-  
ture's brain have past !  
Even from the topmost stone, upon the  
steep,  
Are but three bounds—and look, Sir, at  
this last—  
O Master ! it has been a cruel leap.

"For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;  
And in my simple mind we cannot tell  
What cause the Hart might have to love  
this place,  
And come and make his deathbed near the  
well.

"Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,  
Lulled by the fountain in the summer-tide ;  
This water was perhaps the first he drank  
When he had wandered from his mother's  
side.

"In April here beneath the flowering thorn  
He heard the birds their morning carols  
sing ;  
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was  
born  
Not half a furlong from that self-same  
spring.

"Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant  
shade ;  
The sun on drearier hollow never shone ;  
So will it be, as I have often said,  
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all are  
gone."

"Grey-headed Shepherd, thou hast spoken  
well ;  
Small difference lies between thy creed and  
mine :  
This Beast not unobserved by Nature fell ;  
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

"The Being, that is in the clouds and air,  
That is in the green leaves among the  
groves,  
Maintains a deep and reverential care  
For the unoffending creatures whom he  
loves.

"The pleasure-house is dust :—behind,  
before,  
This is no common waste, no common  
gloom ;  
But Nature, in due course of time, once  
more  
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

"She leaves these objects to a slow decay,  
That what we are, and have been, may be  
known ;  
But at the coming of the milder day,  
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

"One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,  
Taught both by what she shows, and what  
conceals ;

Never to blend our pleasure or our pride  
With sorrow of the meanest thing that  
feels."

1800.

### "TIS SAID, THAT SOME HAVE DIED FOR LOVE"

'Tis said, that some have died for love :  
And here and there a churchyard grave is  
found

In the cold north's unhallowed ground,  
Because the wretched man himself had slain,  
His love was such a grievous pain.

And there is one whom I five years have  
known ;

He dwells alone

Upon Helvellyn's side :

He loved—the pretty Barbara died ;

And thus he makes his moan :

Three years had Barbara in her grave been  
laid

When thus his moan he made :

"Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind  
that oak !

Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,

That in some other way yon smoke

May mount into the sky !

The clouds pass on ; they from the heavens  
depart.

I look—the sky is empty space ;

I know not what I trace ;

But when I cease to look, my hand is on  
my heart.

"Oh ! what a weight is in these shades !  
Ye leaves,

That murmur once so dear, when will it  
cease ?

Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,

It robs my heart of peace.

Thou Thrush, that singest loud—and loud  
and free,

Into yon row of willows flit,

Upon that alder sit ;

Or sing another song, or choose another tree.

"Roll back, sweet Rill ! back to thy  
mountain-bounds,

And there for ever be thy waters chained !  
For thou dost haunt the air with sounds  
That cannot be sustained ;

If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged bough  
Headlong yon waterfall must come,

Oh let it then be dumb !

Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which  
thou art now.

"Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny  
showers,

Proud as a rainbow spanning half the vale,

Thou one fair shrub, oh ! shed thy flowers,

And stir not in the gale.

For thus to see thee nodding in the air,

To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,

Thus rise and thus descend,—

Disturbs me till the sight is more than I can  
dear."

The Man who makes this feverish com-  
plaint

Is one of giant stature, who could dance

Equipped from head to foot in iron mail.

Ah gentle Love ! if ever thought was thine

To store up kindred hours for me, thy face

Turn from me, gentle Love ! nor let me  
walk

Within the sound of Emma's voice, nor  
know

Such happiness as I have known to-day.

1800.

### THE CHILDLESS FATHER

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. When I was  
a child at Cockermouth, no funeral took place  
without a basin filled with sprigs of boxwood  
being placed upon a table covered with a white  
cloth in front of the house. The huntings on foot,  
in which the old man is supposed to join as here  
described, were of common, almost habitual,  
occurrence in our vales when I was a boy ; and  
the people took much delight in them. They are  
now less frequent.

"UP, Timothy, up with your staff and  
away !

Not a soul in the village this morning will  
stay ;

The hare has just started from Hamilton's  
grounds,

And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the  
hounds."

—Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet, and green,  
On the slopes of the pastures all colours were seen;  
With their comely blue aprons, and caps white as snow,  
The girls on the hills made a holiday show.

Fresh sprigs of green box-wood, not six months before,  
Filled the funeral basin<sup>1</sup> at Timothy's door;  
A coffin through Timothy's threshold had past;  
One Child did it bear, and that Child was his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and the fray,  
The horse and the horn, and the hark! hark away!  
Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut  
With a leisurely motion the door of his hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said;  
"The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead."

But of this in my ears not a word did he speak;  
And he went to the chase with a tear on his cheek.

1800.

### SONG

#### FOR THE WANDERING JEW

THOUGH the torrents from their fountains  
Roar down many a craggy steep,  
Yet they find among the mountains  
Resting-places calm and deep.

Clouds that love through air to hasten,  
Ere the storm its fury stills,  
Helmet-like themselves will fasten  
On the heads of towering hills.

<sup>1</sup> In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs of box-wood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this box-wood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased.

What, if through the frozen centre  
Of the Alps the Chamois bound,  
Yet he has a home to enter  
In some nook of chosen ground:

And the Sea-horse, though the ocean  
Yield him no domestic cave,  
Slumbers without sense of motion,  
Couched upon the rocking wave.

If on windy days the Raven  
Gambol like a dancing skiff,  
Not the less she loves her haven  
In the bosom of the cliff.

The fleet Ostrich, till day closes,  
Vagrant over desert sands,  
Brooding on her eggs reposes  
When chill night that care demands.

Day and night my toils redouble,  
Never nearer to the goal;  
Night and day, I feel the trouble  
Of the Wanderer in my soul. 1800.

### RURAL ARCHITECTURE

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. These structures, as every one knows, are common amongst our hills, being built by shepherds, as conspicuous marks, and occasionally by boys in sport.

THERE'S George Fisher, Charles Fleming,  
and Reginald Shore,  
Three rosy-cheeked school-boys, the highest  
not more

Than the height of a counsellor's bag;  
To the top of GREAT HOW<sup>1</sup> did it please  
them to climb:

And there they built up, without mortar or lime,

A Man on the peak of the crag.

They built him of stones gathered up as  
they lay:

They built him and christened him all in  
one day,

An urchin both vigorous and hale;  
And so without scruple they called him  
Ralph Jones.

<sup>1</sup> Great How is a single and conspicuous hill, which rises towards the foot of Thirlmere, on the western side of the beautiful dale of Leggerthwaite, along the high road between Keswick and Ambleside.

Now Ralph is renowned for the length of  
his bones ;  
The Magog of Legberthwaite dale.

Just half a week after, the wind sallied forth,  
And, in anger or merriment, out of the  
north,  
Coming on with a terrible pother,  
From the peak of the crag blew the giant  
away.

And what did these school-boys?—The  
very next day  
They went and they built up another.

—Some little I've seen of blind boisterous  
works

By Christian disturbers more savage than  
Turks,

Spirits busy to do and undo :

At remembrance whereof my blood some-  
times will flag ;

Then, light-hearted Boys, to the top of the  
crag !

And I'll build up a giant with you.

1800.

### ELLEN IRWIN :

OR,

#### THE BRAES OF KIRTLE<sup>1</sup>

It may be worth while to observe that as there are Scotch Poems on this subject in simple ballad strain, I thought it would be both presumptuous and superfluous to attempt treating it in the same way ; and, accordingly, I chose a construction of stanza quite new in our language ; in fact, the same as that of Bürger's *Leonora*, except that the first and third lines do not, in my stanzas, rhyme. At the outset I threw out a classical image to prepare the reader for the style in which I meant to treat the story, and so to preclude all comparison.

FAIR Ellen Irwin, when she sate  
Upon the braes of Kirtle,  
Was lovely as a Grecian maid  
Adorned with wreaths of myrtle ;  
Young Adam Bruce beside her lay,  
And there did they beguile the day  
With love and gentle speeches,  
Beneath the budding beeches.

<sup>1</sup> The Kirtle is a river in the southern part of Scotland, on the banks of which the events here related took place.

From many knights and many squires  
The Bruce had been selected ;  
And Gordon, fairest of them all,  
By Ellen was rejected.  
Sad tidings to that noble Youth !  
For it may be proclaimed with truth,  
If Bruce hath loved sincerely,  
That Gordon loves as dearly.

But what are Gordon's form and face,  
His shattered hopes and crosses,  
To them, 'mid Kirtle's pleasant braes,  
Reclined on flowers and mosses ?  
Alas that ever he was born !  
The Gordon, couched behind a thorn,  
Sees them and their caressing ;  
Beholds them blest and blessing.

Proud Gordon, maddened by the thoughts  
That through his brain are travelling,  
Rushed forth, and at the heart of Bruce  
He launched a deadly javelin !  
Fair Ellen saw it as it came,  
And, starting up to meet the same,  
Did with her body cover  
The Youth, her chosen lover.

And, falling into Bruce's arms,  
Thus died the beauteous Ellen,  
Thus, from the heart of her True-love,  
The mortal spear repelling.  
And Bruce, as soon as he had slain  
The Gordon, sailed away to Spain ;  
And fought with rage incessant  
Against the Moorish crescent.

But many days, and many months,  
And many years ensuing,  
This wretched Knight did vainly seek  
The death that he was wooing.  
So, coming his last help to crave,  
Heart-broken, upon Ellen's grave  
His body he extended,  
And there his sorrow ended.

Now ye, who willingly have heard  
The tale I have been telling,  
May in Kirkconnel churchyard view  
The grave of lovely Ellen :  
By Ellen's side the Bruce is laid ;  
And, for the stone upon his head,  
May no rude hand deface it,  
And its forlorn *Mir jarrt* !

1800.

## ANDREW JONES

I HATE that Andrew Jones; he'll breed  
His children up to waste and pillage.  
I wish the press-gang or the drum  
With its tantara sound would come,  
And sweep him from the village!

I said not this, because he loves  
Through the long day to swear and tittle;  
But for the poor dear sake of one  
To whom a foul deed he had done,  
A friendless man, a travelling cripple!

For this poor crawling helpless wretch,  
Some horseman who was passing by,  
A penny on the ground had thrown;  
But the poor cripple was alone  
And could not stoop—no help was nigh.

Inch-thick the dust lay on the ground  
For it had long been droughty weather;  
So with his staff the cripple wrought  
Among the dust till he had brought  
The half-pennies together.

It chanced that Andrew passed that way  
Just at the time; and there he found  
The cripple in the mid-day heat  
Standing alone, and at his feet  
He saw the penny on the ground.

He stopped and took the penny up:  
And when the cripple nearer drew,  
Quoth Andrew, "Under half-a-crown,  
What a man finds is all his own,  
And so, my Friend, good-day to you."

And hence I said, that Andrew's boys  
Will all be trained to waste and pillage;  
And wished the press-gang, or the drum  
With its tantara sound, would come  
And sweep him from the village.

1800.

## THE TWO THIEVES;

## OR, THE LAST STAGE OF AVARICE.

This is described from the life, as I was in the habit of observing when a boy at Hawkshead School. Daniel was more than eighty years older than myself when he was daily, thus occupied, under my notice. No book could have so early taught me to think of the changes to which

human life is subject; and while looking at him I could not but say to myself—we may, one of us, I or the happiest of my playmates, live to become still more the object of pity than this old man, this half-doating pilferer!

O NOW that the genius of Bewick were mine,  
And the skill which he learned on the banks  
Of the Tyne.  
Then the Muses might deal with me just  
As they chose,  
For I'd take my last leave both of verse  
And of prose.

What feats would I work with my magical  
hand!  
Book-learning and books should be banished  
the land:  
And, for hunger and thirst and such  
troublesome calls,  
Every ale-house should then have a feast  
on its walls.

The traveller would hang his wet clothes  
on a chair;  
Let them smoke, let them burn, not a straw  
would he care!  
For the Prodigal Son, Joseph's Dream and  
his sheaves,  
Oh, what would they be to my tale of two  
Thieves?

The One, yet unbreeched, is not three  
birthdays old,  
His Grandsire that age more than thirty  
times told;  
There are ninety good seasons of fair and  
foul weather  
Between them, and both go a-pilfering  
together.

With chips is the carpenter strewing his  
floor?  
Is a cart-load of turf at an old woman's  
door?  
Old Daniel his hand to the treasure will  
slide!  
And his Grandson's as busy at work by his  
side.

Old Daniel begins; he stops short—and  
his eye,  
Through the lost look of dotage, is cunning  
and sly:

'Tis a look which at this time is hardly his own,  
But tells a plain tale of the days that are flown.

He once had a heart which was moved by the wires  
Of manifold pleasures and many desires :  
And what if he cherished his purse ? 'Twas no more  
Than treading a path trod by thousands before.

'Twas a path trod by thousands ; but Daniel is one  
Who went something farther than others have gone,  
And now with old Daniel you see how it fares ;  
You see to what end he has brought his grey hairs.

The pair sally forth hand in hand : ere the sun  
Has peered o'er the beeches, their work is begun :  
And yet, into whatever sin they may fall,  
This child but half knows it, and that, not at all.

They hunt through the streets with deliberate tread,  
And each, in his turn, becomes leader or led ;  
And, wherever they carry their plots and their wiles,  
Every face in the village is dimpled with smiles.

Neither checked by the rich nor the needy they roam ;  
For the grey-headed Sire has a daughter at home,  
Who will gladly repair all the damage that's done ;  
And three, were it asked, would be rendered for one.

Old Man ! whom so oft I with pity have eyed,  
I love thee, and love the sweet Boy at thy side :  
Long yet may'st thou live ! for a teacher we see  
That lifts up the veil of our nature in thee.  
1800.

## A CHARACTER

The principal features are taken from that of my friend Robert Jones.

I MARVEL how Nature could ever find space  
For so many strange contrasts in one human face :

There's thought and no thought, and there's paleness and bloom  
And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure and gloom.

There's weakness, and strength both redundant and vain ;  
Such strength as, if ever affliction and pain  
Could pierce through a temper that's soft to disease,  
Would be rational peace—a philosopher's ease.

There's indifference, alike when he fails or succeeds,  
And attention full ten times as much as there needs ;  
Pride where there's no envy, there's so much of joy ;  
And mildness, and spirit both forward and coy.

There's freedom, and sometimes a diffident stare  
Of shame scarcely seeming to know that she's there,  
There's virtue, the title it surely may claim,  
Yet wants heaven knows what to be worthy the name.

This picture from nature may seem to depart,  
Yet the Man would at once run away with your heart ;  
And I for five centuries right gladly would be  
Such an odd such a kind happy creature as he.  
1800.

## INSCRIPTIONS

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE  
STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S ISLAND,  
DERWENTWATER.

IF thou in the dear love of some one Friend  
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts

Will sometimes in the happiness of love  
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou rever-  
ence

This quiet spot; and, Stranger! not un-  
moved

Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of  
stones,

The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.  
Here stood his threshold; here was spread  
the roof

That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man,  
After long exercise in social cares  
And offices humane, intent to adore  
The Deity, with undistracted mind,  
And meditate on everlasting things,  
In utter solitude.—But he had left  
A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man  
loved

As his own soul. And, when with eye  
upraised

To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,  
While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore  
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced  
Along the beach of this small isle and  
thought

Of his Companion, he would pray that  
both

(Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled)  
Might die in the same moment. Nor in  
vain

So prayed he:—as our chronicles report,  
Though here the Hermit numbered his last  
day

Far from St. Cuthbert his beloved Friend,  
Those holy Men both died in the same  
hour. 1800.

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL UPON A STONE  
IN THE WALL OF THE HOUSE (AN OUT-  
HOUSE), ON THE ISLAND AT GRASMERE.

RUDE is this Edifice, and Thou hast seen  
Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintained  
Proportions more harmonious, and ap-  
proached

To closer fellowship with ideal grace.  
But take it in good part:—alas! the poor  
Vitruvius of our village had no help  
From the great City; never, upon leaves  
Of red Morocco folio, saw displayed,  
In long succession, pre-existing ghosts  
Of Beauties yet unborn—the rustic Lodge

Antique, and Cottage with verandah graced,  
Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,  
Green-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined  
hermitage.

Thou see'st a homely Pile, yet to these  
walls

The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and  
here

The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from  
the wind.

And hither does one Poet sometimes row  
His pinnace, a small vagrant barge, up-piled  
With plenteous store of heath and withered  
fern,

(A lading which he with his sickle cuts,  
Among the mountains) and beneath this  
roof

He makes his summer couch, and here at  
noon

Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn,  
the Sheep,

Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,  
Lie round him, even as if they were a part  
Of his own Household: nor, while from  
his bed

He looks, through the open door-place,  
toward the lake

And to the stirring breezes, does he want  
Creations lovely as the work of sleep—  
Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy!

1800.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL UPON A  
STONE, THE LARGEST OF A HEAP  
LYING NEAR A DESERTED QUARRY,  
UPON ONE OF THE ISLANDS AT RYDAL.

STRANGER! this hillock of mis-shapen  
stones

Is not a Ruin spared or made by time,  
Nor, as perchance thou rashly deem'st, the  
Cairn

Of some old British Chief: 'tis nothing  
more

Than the rude embryo of a little Dome  
Or Pleasure-house, once destined to be  
built

Among the birch-trees of this rocky isle.  
But, as it chanced, Sir William having  
learned

That from the shore a full-grown man  
might wade,

And make himself a freeman of this spot  
At any hour he chose, the prudent Knight



Desisted, and the quarry and the mound  
Are monuments of his unfinished task.  
The block on which these lines are traced,  
perhaps,  
Was once selected as the corner-stone  
Of that intended Pile, which would have  
been  
Some quaint odd plaything of elaborate  
skill,

So that, I guess, the linnet and the thrush,  
And other little builders who dwell here,  
Had wondered at the work. But blame  
him not,

For old Sir William was a gentle Knight,  
Bred in this vale, to which he appertained  
With all his ancestry. Then peace to him,  
And for the outrage which he had devised  
Entire forgiveness!—But if thou art one  
On fire with thy impatience to become  
An inmate of these mountains,—if, dis-  
turbed

By beautiful conceptions, thou hast hewn  
Out of the quiet rock the elements  
Of thy trim Mansion destined soon to blaze  
In snow-white splendour,—think again;  
and, taught

By old Sir William and his quarry, leave  
Thy fragments to the bramble and the  
rose;

There let the vernal slow-worm sun himself,  
And let the redbreast hop from stone to  
stone. 1800.

### THE SPARROW'S NEST

Written in the Orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.  
At the end of the garden of my father's house at  
Cockermouth was a high terrace that commanded  
a fine view of the river Derwent and Cockermouth  
Castle. This was our favourite play-ground. The  
terrace-wall, a low one, was covered with closely-  
clipt privet and roses, which gave an almost  
impervious shelter to birds that built their nests  
there. The latter of these stanzas alludes to one  
of those nests.

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,  
Those bright blue eggs together laid!  
On me the chance-discovered sight  
Gleamed like a vision of delight.  
I started—seeming to espy  
The home and sheltered bed,  
The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by  
My Father's house, in wet or dry

My sister Emmeline and I  
Together visited.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it;  
Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it:  
Such heart was in her, being then  
A little Prattler among men.  
The Blessing of my later years  
Was with me when a boy:  
She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;  
And humble cares, and delicate fears;  
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;  
And love, and thought, and joy.

1801.

### "PELION AND OSSA FLOURISH SIDE BY SIDE"

PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,  
Together in immortal books enrolled:  
His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold;  
And that inspiring Hill, which "did divide  
Into two ample horns his forehead wide,"  
Shines with poetic radiance as of old;  
While not an English Mountain we behold  
By the celestial Muses glorified.  
Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in  
crowds:

What was the great Parnassus' self to Thee,  
Mount Skiddaw? In his natural sover-  
eignty

Our British Hill is nobler far; he shrouds  
His double front among Atlantic clouds,  
And pours forth streams more sweet than  
Castaly. 1801.

### THE PRIORESS'S TALE

FROM CHAUCER

"Call up him who left half told  
The story of Cambuscan bold."

In the following Poem no further deviation  
from the original has been made than was neces-  
sary for the fluent reading and instant under-  
standing of the Author: so much, however, is the  
language altered since Chaucer's time, especially  
in pronunciation, that much was to be removed,  
and its place supplied with as little incongruity  
as possible. The ancient accent has been retained  
in a few conjunctions, as *alid* and *ahady*, from a  
conviction that such sprinklings of antiquity  
would be admitted, by persons of taste, to have  
a graceful accordance with the subject. The  
fierce bigotry of the Prioress forms a fine back-

ground for her tender-hearted sympathies with the Mother and Child; and the mode in which the story is told amply atones for the extravagance of the miracle.

## I

"O LORD, our Lord! how wondrously,"  
(quoth she)

"Thy name in this large world is spread  
abroad!

For not alone by men of dignity  
Thy worship is performed and precious  
laud;

But by the mouths of children, gracious  
God!

Thy goodness is set forth; they when they  
lie

Upon the breast thy name do glorify.

## II

"Wherefore in praise, the worthiest that I  
may,

Jesu! of thee, and the white Lily-flower  
Which did thee bear, and is a Maid for  
aye,

To tell a story I will use my power;  
Not that I may increase her honour's  
dower,

For she herself is honour, and the root  
Of goodness, next her Son, our soul's best  
boot.

## III

"O Mother Maid! O Maid and Mother  
free!

O bush unburnt! burning in Moses' sight!  
That down didst ravish from the Deity,  
Through humbleness, the spirit that did  
alight

Upon thy heart, whence, through that  
glory's might,

Conceived was the Father's sapience,  
Help me to tell it in thy reverence!

## IV

"Lady! thy goodness, thy magnificence,  
Thy virtue, and thy great humility,  
Surpass all science and all utterance;  
For sometimes, Lady! ere men pray to  
thee

Thou goest before in thy benignity,  
The light to us vouchsafing of thy prayer,  
To be our guide unto thy Son so dear.

## V

"My knowledge is so weak, O blissful  
Queen!

To tell abroad thy mighty worthiness,  
That I the weight of it may not sustain;  
But as a child of twelvemonths old or less,  
That laboureth his language to express,  
Even so fare I; and therefore, I thee pray,  
Guide thou my song which I of thee shall  
say.

## VI

"There was in Asia, in a mighty town,  
Mong Christian folk, a street where Jews  
might be,

Assigned to them and given them for their  
own

By a great Lord, for gain and usury,  
Hateful to Christ and to his company;  
And through this street who list might ride  
and wend;

Free was it, and unbarred at either end.

## VII

"A little school of Christian people stood  
Down at the farther end, in which there  
were

A nest of children come of Christian blood,  
That learned in that school from year to  
year

Such sort of doctrine as men used there,  
That is to say, to sing and read also,  
As little children in their childhood do.

## VIII

"Among these children was a Widow's son,  
A little scholar, scarcely seven years old,  
Who day by day unto this school hath gone,  
And eke, when he the image did behold  
Of Jesu's Mother, as he had been told,  
This Child was wont to kneel adown and  
say

*Ave Marie*, as he goeth by the way.

## IX

"This Widow thus her little Son hath taught  
Our blissful Lady, Jesu's Mother dear,  
To worship aye, and he forgat it not;  
For simple infant hath a ready ear.  
Sweet is the holiness of youth: and hence,  
Calling to mind this matter when I may,  
Saint Nicholas in my presence standeth aye,  
For he so young to Christ did reverence.

## X

"This little Child, while in the school he sate  
His Primer conning with an earnest cheer,  
The whilst the rest their anthem-book  
repeat  
The *Alma Redemptoris* did he hear;  
And as he durst he drew him near and  
near,  
And hearkened to the words and to the  
note,  
Till the first verse he learned it all by rote.

## XI

"This Latin knew he nothing what it said,  
For he too tender was of age to know;  
But to his comrade he repaired, and prayed  
That he the meaning of this song would  
show,  
And unto him declare why men sing so;  
This oftentimes, that he might be at ease,  
This child did him beseech on his bare  
knees.

## XII

"His Schoolfellow, who elder was than he,  
Answered him thus:—'This song, I have  
heard say,  
Was fashioned for our blissful Lady free;  
Her to salute, and also her to pray  
To be our help upon our dying day:  
If there is more in this, I know it not;  
Song do I learn,—small grammar I have  
got.'

## XIII

"And is this song fashioned in reverence  
Of Jesu's Mother?' said this Innocent;  
'Now, certes, I will use my diligence  
To con it all ere Christmas-tide be spent;  
Although I for my Primer shall be shent,  
And shall be beaten three times in an hour,  
Our Lady I will praise with all my power.'

## XIV

"His Schoolfellow, whom he had so be-  
sought,  
As they went homeward taught him privily  
And then he sang it well and fearlessly,  
From word to word according to the note:  
Twice in a day it passed through his  
throat;  
Homeward and schoolward whensoever he  
went,  
On Jesu's Mother fixed was his intent.

## XV

"Through all the Jewry (this before said I)  
This little Child, as he came to and fro,  
Full merrily then would he sing and cry,  
O *Alma Redemptoris*! high and low:  
The sweetness of Christ's Mother pierced so  
His heart, that her to praise, to her to  
pray,  
He cannot stop his singing by the way.

## XVI

"The Serpent, Satan, our first foe, that hath  
His wasp's nest in Jew's heart, upswelled  
—'O woe,  
O Hebrew people!' said he in his wrath,  
'Is it an honest thing? Shall this be so?  
That such a Boy where'er he lists shall go  
In your despite, and sing his hymns and  
saws,  
Which is against the reverence of our laws!'

## XVII

"From that day forward have the Jews  
conspired  
Out of the world this Innocent to chase;  
And to this end a Homicide they hired,  
That in an alley had a privy place,  
And, as the Child 'gan to the school to pace,  
This cruel Jew him seized, and held him fast  
And cut his throat, and in a pit him cast.

## XVIII

"I say that him into a pit they threw,  
A loathsome pit, whence noisome scents  
exhale;  
O cursed folk! away, ye Herods new!  
What may your ill intentions you avail?  
Murder will out; certes it will not fail;  
Know, that the honour of high God may  
spread,  
The blood cries out on your accursed deed.

## XIX

"O Martyr 'stablished in virginity!  
Now may'st thou sing for aye before the  
throne,  
Following the Lamb celestial," quoth she,  
"Of which the great Evangelist, Saint John,  
In Patmos wrote, who saith of them that  
go  
Before the Lamb singing continually,  
That never fleshly woman they did know.

## XX

"Now this poor widow waiteth all that night  
After her little Child, and he came not;  
For which, by earliest glimpse of morning  
light,  
With face all pale with dread and busy  
thought,  
She at the School and elsewhere him hath  
sought  
Until thus far she learned, that he had been  
In the Jews' street, and there he last was  
seen.

## XXI

"With Mother's pity in her breast enclosed  
She goeth, as she were half out of her mind,  
To every place wherein she hath supposed  
By likelihood her little Son to find;  
And ever on Christ's Mother meek and kind  
She cried, till to the Jewry she was brought,  
And him among the accursed Jews she  
sought.

## XXII

"She asketh, and she piteously doth pray  
To every Jew that dwelleth in that place  
To tell her if her child had passed that way;  
They all said—Nay; but Jesu of his grace  
Gave to her thought, that in a little space  
She for her Son in that same spot did cry  
Where he was cast into a pit hard by.

## XXIII

"O thou great God that dost perform thy  
laud  
By mouths of Innocents, lo! here thy might;  
This gem of chastity, this emerald,  
And eke of martyrdom this ruby bright,  
There, where with mangled throat he lay  
upright,  
The *Alma Redemptoris* 'gan to sing,  
So loud, that with his voice the place did  
ring.

## XXIV

"The Christian folk that through the Jewry  
went  
Come to the spot in wonder at the thing;  
And hastily they for the Provost sent;  
Immediately he came, not tarrying,  
And praiseth Christ that is our heavenly  
King,  
And eke his Mother, honour of Mankind:  
Which done he bade that they the Jews  
should bind.

## XX

"This Child with piteous lamentation then  
Was taken up, singing his song alway;  
And with procession great and pomp of men  
To the next Abbey him they bare away;  
His Mother swooning by the body lay:  
And scarcely could the people that were  
near  
Remove this second Rachel from the bier.

## XXVI

"Torment and shameful death to every one  
This Provost doth for those bad Jews  
prepare  
That of this murder wist, and that anon:  
Such wickedness his judgments cannot  
spare;  
Who will do evil, evil shall he bear;  
Them therefore with wild horses did he  
draw,  
And after that he hung them by the law.

## XXVII

"Upon his bier this Innocent doth lie  
Before the altar while the Mass doth last:  
The Abbot with his convent's company  
Then sped themselves to bury him full fast;  
And, when they holy water on him cast,  
Yet spake this Child when sprinkled was  
the water,  
And sang, O *Alma Redemptoris Mater!*

## XXVIII

"This Abbot, for he was a holy man,  
As all Monks are, or surely ought to be,  
In supplication to the Child began  
Thus saying, 'O dear Child! I summon  
thee  
In virtue of the holy Trinity  
Tell me the cause why thou dost sing this  
hymn  
Since that thy throat is cut, as it doth seem.'

## XXIX

"My throat is cut unto the bone, I trow,'  
Said this young Child, 'and by the law of  
kind  
I should have died, yea many hours ago;  
But Jesus Christ, as in the books ye find,  
Will that his glory last, and be in mind;  
And, for the worship of his Mother dear,  
Yet may I sing O *Alma!* loud and clear.

## XXX

" ' This well of mercy, Jesu's Mother sweet,  
After my knowledge I have loved alway;  
And in the hour when I my death did meet  
To me she came, and thus to me did say,  
' Thou in thy dying sing this holy lay,'  
As ye have heard; and soon as I had sung  
Methought she laid a grain upon my tongue.

## XXXI

" ' Wherefore I sing, nor can from song  
refrain,  
In honour of that blissful Maiden free,  
Till from my tongue off-taken is the grain;  
And after that thus said she unto me;  
' My little Child, then will I come for thee  
Soon as the grain from off thy tongue they  
take:  
Be not dismayed, I will not thee forsake! "

## XXXII

" ' This holy Monk, this Abbot—him mean I,  
Touched then his tongue, and took away  
the grain;  
And he gave up the ghost full peacefully;  
And, when the Abbot had this wonder seen,  
His salt tears trickled down like showers of  
rain;  
And on his face he dropped upon the ground,  
And still he lay as if he had been bound.

## XXXIII

" ' Eke the whole Convent on the pavement  
lay,  
Weeping and praising Jesu's Mother dear;  
And after that they rose, and took their way,  
And lifted up this Martyr from the bier,  
And in a tomb of precious marble clear  
Enclosed his uncorrupted body sweet.—  
Where'er he be, God grant us him to meet!

## XXXIV

" ' Young Hew of Lincoln! in like sort laid  
low  
By cursed Jews—thing well and widely  
known,  
For it was done a little while ago—  
Pray also thou for us, while here we tarry  
Weak sinful folk, that God, with pitying eye,  
In mercy would his mercy multiply  
On us, for reverence of his Mother Mary! "

1801.

THE CUCKOO AND THE  
NIGHTINGALE

FROM CHAUCER

## I

THE God of Love—*ah, benedicite!*  
How mighty and how great a Lord is he!  
For he of low hearts can make high, of  
high  
He can make low, and unto death bring  
nigh;  
And hard hearts he can make them kind  
and free.

## II

Within a little time, as hath been found,  
He can make sick folk whole and fresh and  
sound:  
Them who are whole in body and in mind,  
He can make sick,—bind can he and un-  
bind  
All that he will have bound, or have  
unbound.

## III

To tell his might my wit may not suffice;  
Foolish men he can make them out of  
wise;—  
For he may do all that he will devise;  
Loose livers he can make abate their vice,  
And proud hearts can make tremble in a  
trice.

## IV

In brief, the whole of what he will, he may;  
Against him dare not any wight say nay;  
To humble or afflict whome'er he will,  
To gladden or to grieve, he hath like skill;  
But most his might he sheds on the eve of  
May.

## V

For every true heart, gentle heart and free,  
That with him is, or thinketh so to be,  
Now against May shall have some stirring  
—whether  
To joy, or be it to some mourning; never  
At other time, methinks, in like degree.

## VI

For now when they may hear the small  
birds' song,  
And see the budding leaves the branches  
throng,

This unto their remembrance doth bring  
All kinds of pleasure mixed with sorrowing;  
And longing of sweet thoughts that ever  
long.

## VII

And of that longing heaviness doth come,  
Whence oft great sickness grows of heart  
and home:  
Sick are they all for lack of their desire;  
And thus in May their hearts are set on  
fire,  
So that they burn forth in great martyrdom.

## VIII

In sooth, I speak from feeling, what though  
now  
Old am I, and to genial pleasure slow;  
Yet have I felt of sickness through the May,  
Both hot and cold, and heart-aches every  
day,—  
How hard, alas! to bear, I only know.

## IX

Such shaking doth the fever in me keep  
Through all this May that I have little  
sleep;  
And also 'tis not likely unto me,  
That any living heart should sleepy be  
In which Love's dart its fiery point doth  
steep.

## X

But tossing lately on a sleepless bed,  
I of a token thought which Lovers heed;  
How among them it was a common tale,  
That it was good to hear the Nightingale,  
Ere the vile Cuckoo's note be uttered.

## XI

And then I thought anon as it was day,  
I gladly would go somewhere to essay  
If I perchance a Nightingale might hear,  
For yet had I heard none, of all that year,  
And it was then the third night of the May.

## XII

And soon as I a glimpse of day espied,  
No longer would I in my bed abide,  
But straightway to a wood that was hard by,  
Forth did I go, alone and fearlessly,  
And held the pathway down by a brook-  
side;

## XIII

Till to a lawn I came all white and green,  
I in so fair a one had never been.  
The ground was green, with daisy powdered  
over;  
Tall were the flowers, the grove a lofty  
cover,  
All green and white; and nothing else was  
seen.

## XIV

There sate I down among the fair fresh  
flowers,  
And saw the birds come tripping from their  
bowers,  
Where they had rested them all night; and  
they,  
Who were so joyful at the light of day,  
Began to honour May with all their powers.

## XV

Well did they know that service all by rote,  
And there was many and many a lovely  
note,  
Some, singing loud, as if they had com-  
plained;  
Some with their notes another manner  
feigned;  
And some did sing all out with the full  
throat.

## XVI

They pruned themselves, and made them-  
selves right gay,  
Dancing and leaping light upon the spray;  
And ever two and two together were,  
The same as they had chosen for the year,  
Upon Saint Valentine's returning day.

## XVII

Meanwhile the stream, whose bank I sate  
upon,  
Was making such a noise as it ran on  
Accordant to the sweet Birds' harmony;  
Methought that it was the best melody  
Which ever to man's ear a passage won.

## XVIII

And for delight, but how I never wot,  
I in a slumber and a swoon was caught,  
Not all asleep and yet not waking wholly;  
And as I lay, the Cuckoo, bird unholy,  
Broke silence, or I heard him in my thought.

## XIX

And that was right upon a tree fast by,  
 And who was then ill satisfied but I?  
 Now, God, quoth I, that died upon the  
     road,  
 From thee and thy base throat, keep all  
     that's good,  
 Full little joy have I now of thy cry.

## XX

And, as I with the Cuckoo thus 'gan chide,  
 In the next bush that was me fast beside,  
 I heard the lusty Nightingale so sing,  
 That her clear voice made a loud rioting.  
 Echoing thorough all the green wood wide.

## XXI

Ah! good sweet Nightingale! for my  
     heart's cheer,  
 Hence hast thou stayed a little while too  
     long;  
 For we have had the sorry Cuckoo here,  
 And she hath been before thee with her  
     song;  
 Evil light on her! she hath done me wrong.

## XXII

But hear you now a wondrous thing, I  
     pray;  
 As long as in that swooning-fit I lay,  
 Methought I wist right well what these  
     birds meant,  
 And had good knowing both of their intent,  
 And of their speech, and all that they  
     would say.

## XXIII

The Nightingale thus in my hearing spake:—  
 Good Cuckoo, seek some other bush or  
     brake,  
 And, prithee, let us that can sing dwell here;  
 For every wight eschews thy song to hear,  
 Such uncouth singing verily dost thou make.

## XXIV

What! quoth she then, what is't that ails  
     thee now?  
 It seems to me I sing as well as thou;  
 For mine's a song that is both true and  
     plain,—  
 Although I cannot quaver so in vain  
 As thou dost in thy throat, I wot not how.

## XXV

All men may understanding have of me,  
 But, Nightingale, so may they not of thee;  
 For thou hast many a foolish and quaint  
     cry:—  
 Thou say'st OSEE, OSEE, then how may I  
 Have knowledge, I thee pray, what this  
     may be?

## XXVI

Ah, fool! quoth she, wist thou not what it  
     is?  
 Oft as I say OSEE, OSEE, I wis,  
 Then mean I, that I should be wonderous  
     fain  
 That shamefully they one and all were slain,  
 Whoever against Love mean aught amiss.

## XXVII

And also would I that they all were dead,  
 Who do not think in love their life to lead;  
 For who is loth the God of Love to obey,  
 Is only fit to die, I dare well say,  
 And for that cause OSEE I cry; take heed!

## XXVIII

Ay, quoth the Cuckoo, that is a quaint law,  
 That all must love or die; but I withdraw,  
 And take my leave of all such company,  
 For mine intent it neither is to die,  
 Nor ever while I live Love's yoke to draw.

## XXIX

For lovers of all folk that be alive,  
 The most disquiet have and least do thrive;  
 Most feeling have of sorrow woe and care,  
 And the least welfare cometh to their share;  
 What need is there against the truth to  
     strive?

## XXX

What! quoth she, thou art all out of thy  
     mind,  
 That in thy churlishness a cause canst find  
 To speak of Love's true Servants in this  
     mood;  
 For in this world no service is so good  
 To every wight that gentle is of kind.

## XXXI

For thereof comes all goodness and all  
     worth;  
 All gentleness and honour thence come forth;

Thence worship comes, content and true  
heart's pleasure,  
And full-assured trust, joy without measure,  
And jollity, fresh cheerfulness, and mirth;

## XXXII

And bounty, lowliness, and courtesy,  
And seemliness, and faithful company,  
And dread of shame that will not do amiss;  
For he that faithfully Love's servant is,  
Rather than be disgraced, would chuse to die.

## XXXIII

And that the very truth it is which I  
Now say—in such belief I'll live and die;  
And Cuckoo, do thou so, by my advice.  
Then, quoth she, let me never hope for  
bliss,  
If with that counsel I do e'er comply.

## XXXIV

Good Nightingale! thou speakest wondrous  
fair,  
Yet for all that, the truth is found elsewhere;  
For Love in young folk is but rage, I wis:  
And Love in old folk a great dotage is;  
Who most it useth, him 'twill most impair.

## XXXV

For thereof come all contraries to gladness!  
Thence sickness comes, and overwhelming  
sadness,  
Mistrust and jealousy, despite, debate,  
Dishonour, shame, envy importunate,  
Pride, anger, mischief, poverty, and mad-  
ness.

## XXXVI

Loving is aye an office of despair,  
And one thing is therein which is not fair;  
For whoso gets of love a little bliss,  
Unless it alway stay with him, I wis  
He may full soon go with an old man's  
hair.

## XXXVII

And, therefore, Nightingale! do thou keep  
nigh,  
For trust me well, in spite of thy quaint  
cry,  
If long time from thy mate thou be, or far,  
Thou'lt be as others that forsaken are;  
Then shalt thou raise a clamour as do I.

## XXXVIII

Fie, quoth she, on thy name, Bird ill be-  
seen!  
The God of Love afflict thee with all teen,  
For thou art worse than mad a thousand  
fold;  
For many a one hath virtues manifold,  
Who had been nought, if Love had never  
been.

## XXXIX

For evermore his servants Love amendeth,  
And he from every blemish them defendeth;  
And maketh them to burn, as in a fire,  
In loyalty, and worshipful desire,  
And, when it likes him, joy enough them  
sendeth.

## XL

Thou Nightingale! the Cuckoo said, be still,  
For Love no reason hath but his own will;—  
For to th' untrue he oft gives ease and joy;  
True lovers doth so bitterly annoy,  
He lets them perish through that grievous  
ill.

## XLI

With such a master would I never be;<sup>1</sup>  
For he, in sooth, is blind, and may not see,  
And knows not when he hurts and when he  
heals;  
Within this court full seldom Truth avails,  
So diverse in his wilfulness is he.

## XLII

Then of the Nightingale did I take note,  
How from her inmost heart a sigh she  
brought,  
And said, Alas! that ever I was born,  
Not one word have I now, I am so forlorn,—  
And with that word, she into tears burst  
out.

## XLIII

Alas, alas! my very heart will break,  
Quoth she, to hear this churlish bird thus  
speak  
Of Love, and of his holy services;  
Now, God of Love; thou help me in some  
wise,  
That vengeance on this Cuckoo I may  
wreak.

<sup>1</sup> From a manuscript in the Bodleian, as are also stanzas 44 and 45, which are necessary to complete the sense.



## XLIV

And so methought I started up anon,  
And to the brook I ran and got a stone,  
Which at the Cuckoo hardly I cast,  
And he for dread did fly away full fast;  
And glad, in sooth, was I when he was  
gone.

## XLV

And as he flew, the Cuckoo, ever and aye,  
Kept crying "Farewell!—farewell, Pop-  
injay!"  
As if in scornful mockery of me;  
And on I hunted him from tree to tree,  
Till he was far, all out of sight, away.

## XLVI

Then straightway came the Nightingale to  
me,  
And said, Forsooth, my friend, do I thank  
thee,  
That thou wert near to rescue me; and  
now,  
Unto the God of Love I make a vow,  
That all this May I will thy songstress be.

## XLVII

Well satisfied, I thanked her, and she said,  
By this mishap no longer be dismayed,  
Though thou the Cuckoo heard, ere thou  
heard'st me;  
Yet if I live it shall amended be,  
When next May comes, if I am not afraid.

## XLVIII

And one thing will I counsel thee also,  
The Cuckoo trust not thou, nor his Love's  
saw;  
All that she said is an outrageous lie.  
Nay, nothing shall me bring thereto, quoth  
I,  
For Love, and it hath done me mighty woe.

## XLIX

Yea, hath it? use, quoth she, this medicine;  
This May-time, every day before thou  
dine,  
Go look on the fresh daisy; then say I,  
Although for pain thou may'st be like to  
die,  
Thou wilt be eased, and less wilt droop and  
pine.

## L

And mind always that thou be good and  
true,  
And I will sing one song, of many new,  
For love of thee, as loud as I may cry;  
And then did she begin this song full high,  
"Beshrew all them that are in love untrue."

## LI

And soon as she had sung it to the end,  
Now farewell, quoth she, for I hence must  
wend;  
And, God of Love, that can right well and  
may,  
Send unto thee as mickle joy this day,  
As ever he to Lover yet did send.

## LII

Thus takes the Nightingale her leave of  
me;  
I pray to God with her always to be,  
And joy of love to send her evermore;  
And shield us from the Cuckoo and her  
lore,  
For there is not so false a bird as she.

## LIII

Forth then she flew, the gentle Nightingale,  
To all the Birds that lodged within that  
dale,  
And gathered each and all into one place;  
And them besought to hear her doleful case,  
And thus it was that she began her tale.

## LIV

The Cuckoo—'tis not well that I should  
hide  
How she and I did each the other chide,  
And without ceasing, since it was daylight;  
And now I pray you all to do me right  
Of that false Bird whom Love can not  
abide.

## LV

Then spake one Bird, and full assent all  
gave;  
This matter asketh counsel good as grave,  
For birds we are—all here together brought;  
And, in good sooth, the Cuckoo here is  
not;  
And therefore we a Parliament will have.

## LVI

And thereat shall the Eagle be our Lord,  
 And other Peers whose names are on record;  
 A summons to the Cuckoo shall be sent,  
 And judgment there be given; or that  
 intent  
 Failing, we finally shall make accord.

## LVII

And all this shall be done, without a nay,  
 The morrow after Saint Valentine's day,  
 Under a maple that is well beseen,  
 Before the chamber-window of the Queen,  
 At Woodstock, on the meadow green and  
 gay.

## LVIII

She thanked them; and then her leave she  
 took,  
 And flew into a hawthorn by that brook;  
 And there she sate and sung—upon that  
 tree—  
 "For term of life Love shall have hold of  
 me"—  
 So loudly, that I with that song awoke.

Unlearned Book and rude, as well I know,  
 For beauty thou hast none, nor eloquence,  
 Who did on thee the hardness bestow  
 To appear before my Lady? but a sense  
 Thou surely hast of her benevolence,  
 Whereof her hourly bearing proof doth  
 give;  
 For of all good she is the best alive.

Alas, poor Book! for thy unworthiness,  
 To show to her some pleasant meanings  
 writ  
 In winning words, since through her gen-  
 tleness,  
 Thee she accepts as for her service fit!  
 Oh! it repents me I have neither wit  
 Nor leisure unto thee more worth to give;  
 For of all good she is the best alive.

Beseech her meekly with all lowliness,  
 Though I be far from her I reverence,  
 To think upon my truth and stedfastness,  
 And to abridge my sorrow's violence,  
 Caused by the wish, as knows your sapience,  
 She of her liking proof to me would give;  
 For of all good she is the best alive.

## L'ENVOY

Pleasure's Aurora, Day of gladness !  
 Luna by night, with heavenly influence  
 Illumined ! root of beauty and goodness,  
 Write, and allay, by your beneficence,  
 My sighs breathed forth in silence,—com-  
 fort give !  
 Since of all good, you are the best alive.

EXPLICIT

1801.

## TROILUS AND CRESIDA

FROM CHAUCER

NEXT morning Troilus began to clear  
 His eyes from sleep, at the first break of  
 day,  
 And unto Pandarus, his own Brother dear,  
 For love of God, full piteously did say,  
 We must the Palace see of Cresida;  
 For since we yet may have no other feast,  
 Let us behold her Palace at the least!

And therewithal to cover his intent  
 A cause he found into the Town to go,  
 And they right forth to Cresid's Palace  
 went;  
 But, Lord, this simple Troilus was woe,  
 Him thought his sorrowful heart would  
 break in two;  
 For when he saw her doors fast bolted all,  
 Well nigh for sorrow down he 'gan to fall.

Therewith when this true Lover 'gan be-  
 hold,  
 How shut was every window of the place,  
 Like frost he thought his heart was icy cold;  
 For which, with changed, pale, and deadly  
 face,  
 Without word uttered, forth he 'gan to  
 pace;  
 And on his purpose bent so fast to ride,  
 That no wight his continuance espied.

Then said he thus,—O Palace desolate!  
 O house of houses, once so richly dight!  
 O Palace empty and disconsolate!  
 Thou lamp of which extinguished is the  
 light;  
 O Palace whilom day that now art night,  
 Thou ought'st to fall and I to die; since  
 she  
 Is gone who held us both in sovereignty.

O, of all houses once the crownèd boast !  
 Palace illumined with the sun of bliss ;  
 O ring of which the ruby now is lost,  
 O cause of woe, that cause has been of  
 bliss :

Yet, since I may no better, would I kiss  
 Thy cold doors ; but I dare not for this  
 rout ;

Farewell, thou shrine of which the Saint is  
 out.

Therewith he cast on Pandarus an eye,  
 With changèd face, and piteous to behold ;  
 And when he might his time aright espy,  
 Aye as he rode, to Pandarus he told  
 Both his new sorrow and his joys of old,  
 So piteously, and with so dead a hue,  
 That every wight might on his sorrow rue.

Forth from the spot he rideth up and down,  
 And everything to his remembrance  
 Came as he rode by places of the town  
 Where he had felt such perfect pleasure  
 once.

Lo, yonder saw I mine own Lady dance,  
 And in that Temple she with her bright  
 eyes,

My Lady dear, first bound me captive-wise.

And yonder with joy-smitten heart have I  
 Heard my own Cresid's laugh ; and once  
 at play

I yonder saw her eke full blissfully ;  
 And yonder once she unto me 'gan say—  
 Now, my sweet Troilus, love me well, I  
 pray !

And there so graciously did me behold,  
 That hers unto the death my heart I hold.

And at the corner of that self-same house  
 Heard I my most beloved Lady dear,  
 So womanly, with voice melodious  
 Singing so well, so goodly, and so clear,  
 That in my soul methinks I yet do hear  
 The blissful sound ; and in that very place  
 My Lady first me took unto her grace.

O blissful God of Love ! then thus he cried,  
 When I the process have in memory,  
 How thou hast wearied me on every side,  
 Men thence a book might make, a history ;  
 What need to seek a conquest over me,  
 Since I am wholly at thy will ? what joy  
 Hast thou thy own liege subjects to destroy ?

Dread Lord ! so fearful when provoked,  
 thine ire  
 Well hast thou wreaked on me by pain and  
 grief.

Now mercy, Lord ! thou know'st well I  
 desire

Thy grace above all pleasures first and  
 chief ;

And live and die I will in thy belief ;  
 For which I ask for guerdon but one boon,  
 That Cresida again thou send me soon.

Constrain her heart as quickly to return,  
 As thou dost mine with longing her to see,  
 Then know I well that she would not so-  
 journ.

Now, blissful Lord, so cruel do not be  
 Unto the blood of Troy, I pray of thee,  
 As Juno was unto the Theban blood,  
 From whence to Thebes came griefs in  
 multitude.

And after this he to the gate did go,  
 Whence Cresid rode, as if in haste she was ;  
 And up and down there went, and to and  
 fro,

And to himself full oft he said, alas !  
 From hence my hope, and solace forth did  
 pass.

O would the blissful God now for his joy,  
 I might her see again coming to Troy !

And up to yonder hill was I her guide ;  
 Alas, and there I took of her my leave ;  
 Yonder I saw her to her Father ride,  
 For very grief of which my heart shall  
 cleave ;—

And hither home I came when it was eve ;  
 And here I dwell an outcast from all joy,  
 And shall, unless I see her soon in Troy.

And of himself did he imagine oft,  
 That he was blighted, pale, and waxen less  
 Than he was wont ; and that in whispers  
 soft

Men said, what may it be, can no one guess  
 Why Troilus hath all this heaviness ?  
 All which he of himself conceited wholly  
 Out of his weakness and his melancholy.

Another time he took into his head,  
 That every wight, who in the way passed by,  
 Had of him ruth, and fancied that they  
 said,

I am right sorry Troilus will die:  
And thus a day or two drove wearily;  
As ye have heard; such life 'gan he to lead  
As one that standeth betwixt hope and  
dread.

For which it pleased him in his songs to  
show

The occasion of his woe, as best he might;  
And made a fitting song, of words but few,  
Somewhat his woeful heart to make more  
light;

And when he was removed from all men's  
sight,

With a soft night voice, he of his Lady  
dear,

That absent was, 'gan sing as ye may hear.

O star, of which I lost have all the light,  
With a sore heart well ought I to bewail,  
That ever dark in torment, night by night,  
Toward my death with wind I steer and  
sail;

For which upon the tenth night if thou fail  
With thy bright beams to guide me but  
one hour,

My ship and me Charybdis will devour.

As soon as he this song had thus sung  
through,

He fell again into his sorrows old;  
And every night, as was his wont to do,  
Troilus stood the bright moon to behold;  
And all his trouble to the moon he told,  
And said; I wis, when thou art horn'd  
anew,

I shall be glad if all the world be true.

Thy horns were old as now upon that  
morrow,

When hence did journey my bright Lady  
dear,

That cause is of my torment and my sorrow;  
For which, oh, gentle Luna, bright and  
clear;

For love of God, run fast above thy sphere;  
For when thy horns begin once more to  
spring,

Then shall she come, that with her bliss  
may bring.

The day is more, and longer every night  
Than they were wont to be—for he thought  
so;

And that the sun did take his course not  
right,

By longer way than he was wont to go;  
And said, I am in constant dread I trow,  
That Phæton his son is yet alive,  
His too fond father's car amiss to drive.

Upon the walls fast also would he walk,  
To the end that he the Grecian host might  
see;

And ever thus he to himself would talk:—  
Lo! yonder is my own bright Lady free;  
Or yonder is it that the tents must be;  
And thence does come this air which is so  
sweet,

That in my soul I feel the joy of it.

And certainly this wind, that more and  
more

By moments thus increaseth in my face,  
Is of my Lady's sighs heavy and sore;  
I prove it thus; for in no other space  
Of all this town, save only in this place,  
Feel I a wind, that soundeth so like pain;  
It saith, Alas, why severed are we twain?

A weary while in pain he tosseth thus,  
Till fully past and gone was the ninth  
night;

And ever at his side stood Pandarus,  
Who busily made use of all his might  
To comfort him, and make his heart more  
light;

Giving him always hope, that she the morrow  
Of the tenth day will come, and end his  
sorrow. 1801.

## THE SAILOR'S MOTHER

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I met this  
woman near the Wishing-gate, on the high-road  
that then led from Grasmere to Ambleside. Her  
appearance was exactly as here described, and  
such was her account, nearly to the letter.

ONE morning (raw it was and wet—  
A foggy day in winter time)

A Woman on the road I met,  
Not old, though something past her  
prime:

Majestic in her person, tall and straight;  
And like a Roman matron's was her mien  
and gait.

The ancient spirit is not dead;  
 Old times, thought I, are breathing there;  
 Proud was I that my country bred  
 Such strength, & dignity so fair:  
 She begged an alms, like one in poor  
 estate;

I looked at her again, nor did my pride  
 abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,  
 "What is it," said I, "that you bear,  
 Beneath the covert of your Cloak,  
 Protected from this cold damp air?"  
 She answered, soon as she the question  
 heard,

"A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-  
 bird."

And, thus continuing, she said,  
 "I had a Son, who many a day  
 Sailed on the seas, but he is dead;  
 In Denmark he was cast away:  
 And I have travelled weary miles to see  
 If aught which he had owned might still  
 remain for me.

"The bird and cage they both were his:  
 'Twas my Son's bird; and neat and trim  
 He kept it: many voyages  
 The singing-bird had gone with him;  
 When last he sailed, he left the bird  
 behind;  
 From bodings, as might be, that hung upon  
 his mind.

"He to a fellow-lodger's care  
 Had left it, to be watched and fed,  
 And pipe its song in safety;—there  
 I found it when my Son was dead;  
 And now, God help me for my little wit!  
 I bear it with me, Sir;—he took so much  
 delight in it." 1802.

ALICE FELL;

OR, POVERTY

Written to gratify Mr. Graham of Glasgow,  
 brother of the Author of "The Sabbath." He  
 was a zealous coadjutor of Mr. Clarkson, and a  
 man of ardent humanity. The incident had hap-  
 pened to himself, and he urged me to put it into  
 verse, for humanity's sake. The humbleness,

meanness if you like, of the subject, together  
 with the homely mode of treating it, brought  
 upon me a world of ridicule by the small critics,  
 so that in policy I excluded it from many editions  
 of my Poems, till it was restored at the request  
 of some of my friends, in particular my son-in-  
 law, Edward Quillinan.

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,  
 For threatening clouds the moon had  
 drowned;

When, as we hurried on, my ear  
 Was smitten with a startling sound.

As if the wind blew many ways,  
 I heard the sound,—and more and more,  
 It seemed to follow with the chaise,  
 And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy called out;  
 He stopped his horses at the word,  
 But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,  
 Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast  
 The horses scampered through the rain;  
 But, hearing soon upon the blast  
 The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,  
 "Whence comes," said I, "this piteous  
 moan?"

And there a little Girl I found,  
 Sitting behind the chaise, alone.

"My cloak!" no other word she spake,  
 But loud and bitterly she wept,  
 As if her innocent heart would break;  
 And down from off her seat she leapt.

"What ails you, child?"—she sobbed  
 "Look here!"

I saw it in the wheel entangled,  
 A weather-beaten rag as e'er  
 From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,  
 It hung, nor could at once be freed;  
 But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,  
 A miserable rag indeed!

"And whither are you going, child,  
 To-night along these lonesome ways?"  
 "To Durham," answered she, half wild—  
 "Then come with me into the chaise."

Insensible to all relief  
Sat the poor girl, and forth did send  
Sob after sob, as if her grief  
Could never, never have an end.

"My child, in Durham do you dwell?"  
She checked herself in her distress,  
And said, "My name is Alice Fell;  
I'm fatherless and motherless.

"And I to Durham, Sir, belong."  
Again, as if the thought would choke  
Her very heart, her grief grew strong;  
And all was for her tattered cloak!

The chaise drove on; our journey's end  
Was nigh; and, sitting by my side,  
As if she had lost her only friend  
She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern-door we post;  
Of Alice and her grief I told;  
And I gave money to the host,  
To buy a new cloak for the old.

"And let it be of duffil grey,  
As warm a cloak as man can sell!"  
Proud creature was she the next day,  
The little orphan, Alice Fell! 1802.

## BEGGARS

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Met, and  
described to me by my Sister, near the quarry at  
the head of Rydal lake, a place still a chosen  
resort of vagrants travelling with their families.

SHE had a tall man's height or more;  
Her face from summer's noontide heat  
No bonnet shaded, but she wore  
A mantle, to her very feet  
Descending with a graceful flow,  
And on her head a cap as white as new-  
fallen snow.

Her skin was of Egyptian brown:  
Haughty, as if her eye had seen  
Its own light to a distance thrown,  
She towered, fit person for a Queen  
To lead those ancient Amazonian files;  
Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Grecian  
isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her hand  
And begged an alms with doleful plea  
That ceased not; on our English land  
Such woes, I knew, could never be;  
And yet a boon I gave her, for the crea-  
ture  
Was beautiful to see—a weed of glorious  
feature.

I left her, and pursued my way;  
And soon before me did espy  
A pair of little Boys at play,  
Chasing a crimson butterfly;  
The taller followed with his hat in hand,  
Wreathed round with yellow flowers the  
gayest of the land.

The other wore a rimless crown  
With leaves of laurel stuck about;  
And, while both followed up and down,  
Each whooping with a merry shout,  
In their fraternal features I could trace  
Unquestionable lines of that wild Sup-  
pliant's face.

Yet *they*, so blithe of heart, seemed fit  
For finest tasks of earth or air:  
Wings let them have, and they might flit  
Precursors to Aurora's car,  
Scattering fresh flowers; though happier far,  
I ween,  
To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock and  
level green.

They dart across my path—but lo,  
Each ready with a plaintive whine!  
Said I, "not half an hour ago  
Your Mother has had alms of mine."  
"That cannot be," one answered—"she  
is dead:"—  
I looked reproof—they saw—but neither  
hung his head.

"She has been dead, Sir, many a day."—  
"Hush, boys! you're telling me a lie;  
It was your Mother, as I say!"  
And, in the twinkling of an eye,  
"Come! Come!" cried one, and without  
more ado,  
Off to some other play the joyous Vagrants  
flew!

1802.

## TO A BUTTERFLY

Written in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.  
My sister and I were parted immediately after  
the death of our mother, who died in 1778, both  
being very young.

STAY near me—do not take thy flight !

A little longer stay in sight !  
Much converse do I find in thee,  
Historian of my infancy !  
Float near me ; do not yet depart !  
Dead times revive in thee :  
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art !  
A solemn image to my heart,  
My father's family !

Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the days,  
The time, when, in our childish plays,  
My sister Emmeline and I  
Together chased the butterfly !  
A very hunter did I rush  
Upon the prey :—with leaps and springs  
I followed on from brake to bush ;  
But she, God love her, feared to brush  
The dust from off its wings. 1802.

## THE EMIGRANT MOTHER

Suggested by what I have noticed in more  
than one French fugitive during the time of the  
French Revolution. If I am not mistaken, the  
lines were composed at Sockburn, when I was on  
a visit to Mrs. Wordsworth and her brother.

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned  
In which a Lady driven from France did  
dwell ;  
The big and lesser griefs with which she  
mourned,  
In friendship she to me would often tell.  
This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,  
Where she was childless, daily would repair  
To a poor neighbouring cottage ; as I  
found,  
For sake of a young Child whose home was  
there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond em-  
brace  
This Child, I chanted to myself a lay,  
Endeavouring, in our English tongue, to  
trace

Such things as she unto the Babe might  
say :

And thus, from what I heard and knew, or  
guessed,  
My song the workings of her heart ex-  
pressed.

I

" Dear Babe, thou daughter of another,  
One moment let me be thy mother !  
An infant's face and looks are thine,  
And sure a mother's heart is mine :  
Thy own dear mother's far away,  
At labour in the harvest field :  
Thy little sister is at play ;—  
What warmth, what comfort would it yield  
To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be  
One little hour a child to me !

II

" Across the waters I am come,  
And I have left a babe at home :  
A long, long way of land and sea !  
Come to me—I'm no enemy :  
I am the same who at thy side  
Sate yesterday, and made a nest  
For thee, sweet Baby !—thou hast tried,  
Thou know'st the pillow of my breast ;  
Good, good art thou :—alas ! to me  
Far more than I can be to thee.

III

" Here, little Darling, dost thou lie ;  
An infant thou, a mother I !  
Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears ;  
Mine art thou—spite of these my tears.  
Alas ! before I left the spot,  
My baby and its dwelling-place ;  
The nurse said to me, 'Tears should not  
Be shed upon an infant's face,  
It was unlucky'—no, no, no ;  
No truth is in them who say so !

IV

" My own dear Little-one will sigh,  
Sweet Babe ! and they will let him die.  
'He pines,' they'll say, 'it is his doom,  
And you may see his hour is come.'  
Oh ! had he but thy cheerful smiles,  
Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay,  
Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,  
And countenance like a summer's day,

They would have hopes of him;—and  
then  
I should behold his face again!

V

"'Tis gone—like dreams that we forget;  
There was a smile or two—yet—yet  
I can remember them, I see  
The smiles, worth all the world to me.  
Dear Baby! I must lay thee down;  
Thou troublest me with strange alarms;  
Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own;  
I cannot keep thee in my arms;  
For they confound me;—where—where is  
That last, that sweetest smile of his?

VI

"Oh! how I love thee!—we will stay  
Together here this one half day.  
My sister's child, who bears my name,  
From France to sheltering England came;  
She with her mother crossed the sea;  
The babe and mother near me dwell:  
Yet does my yearning heart to thee  
Turn rather, though I love her well:  
Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here!  
Never was any child more dear!

VII

"—I cannot help it; ill intent  
I've none, my pretty Innocent!  
I weep—I know they do thee wrong,  
These tears—and my poor idle tongue.  
Oh, what a kiss was that! my cheek  
How cold it is! but thou art good;  
Thine eyes are on me—they would speak,  
I think, to help me if they could.  
Blessings upon that soft, warm face,  
My heart again is in its place!

VIII

"While thou art mine, my little Love,  
This cannot be a sorrowful grove;  
Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,  
I seem to find them all in thee:  
Here's grass to play with, here are flowers;  
I'll call thee by my darling's name;  
Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,  
Thy features seem to me the same;  
His little sister thou shalt be;  
And, when once more my home I see,  
I'll tell him many tales of Thee."

1802.

"MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN  
I BEHOLD"

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky:  
So was it when my life began;  
So is it now I am a man;  
So be it when I shall grow old,  
Or let me die!  
The Child is father of the Man;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.

1802.

"AMONG ALL LOVELY THINGS  
MY LOVE HAD BEEN"

AMONG all lovely things my Love had been;  
Had noted well the stars, all flowers that  
grew  
About her home; but she had never seen  
A glow-worm, never one, and this I knew.

While riding near her home one stormy  
night  
A single glow-worm did I chance to spy;  
I gave a fervent welcome to the sight,  
And from my horse I leapt; great joy had I.

Upon a leaf the glow-worm did I lay,  
To bear it with me through the stormy night:  
And, as before, it shone without dismay;  
Albeit putting forth a fainter light.

When to the dwelling of my Love I came,  
I went into the orchard quietly;  
And left the glow-worm, blessing it by name,  
Laid safely by itself, beneath a tree.

The whole next day, I hoped, and hoped  
with fear;  
At night the glow-worm shone beneath the  
tree;

I led my Lucy to the spot, "Look here,"  
Oh! joy it was for her, and joy for me!

1802.

WRITTEN IN MARCH

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT  
THE FOOT OF BROTHER'S WATER.

Extempore. This little poem was a favourite  
with Joanna Baillie.



THE Cock is crowing,  
The stream is flowing,  
The small birds twitter,  
The lake doth glitter,  
The green field sleeps in the sun;  
The oldest and youngest  
Are at work with the strongest;  
The cattle are grazing,  
Their heads never raising;  
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated  
The snow hath retreated,  
And now doth fare ill  
On the top of the bare hill;  
The ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon:  
There's joy in the mountains;  
There's life in the fountains;  
Small clouds are sailing,  
Blue sky prevailing;  
The rain is over and gone! 1802.

### THE REDBREAST CHASING THE BUTTERFLY

Observed, as described, in the then beautiful orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.

ART thou the bird whom Man loves best,  
The pious bird with the scarlet breast,  
Our little English Robin;  
The bird that comes about our doors  
When Autumn-winds are sobbing?  
Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors?  
Their Thomas in Finland,  
And Russia far inland?  
The bird, that by some name or other  
All men who know thee call their brother,  
The darling of children and men?  
Could Father Adam<sup>1</sup> open his eyes  
And see this sight beneath the skies,  
He'd wish to close them again.  
—If the Butterfly knew but his friend,  
Hither his flight he would bend;  
And find his way to me,  
Under the branches of the tree:  
In and out, he darts about;  
Can this be the bird, to man so good,  
That, after their bewildering,

<sup>1</sup> See *Paradise Lost*, Book XI., where Adam points out to Eve the ominous sign of the Eagle chasing "two birds of gayest plume," and the gentle Hart and Hind pursued by their enemy.

Covered with leaves the little children,  
So painfully in the wood?  
What ailed thee, Robin, that thou could'st pursue

A beautiful creature,  
That is gentle by nature?  
Beneath the summer sky  
From flower to flower let him fly;  
'Tis all that he wishes to do.  
The cheerer Thou of our in-door sadness,  
He is the friend of our summer gladness:  
What hinders, then, that ye should be  
Playmates in the sunny weather,  
And fly about in the air together!  
His beautiful wings in crimson are drest,  
A crimson as bright as thine own:  
Would'st thou be happy in thy nest,  
O pious Bird! whom man loves best,  
Love him, or leave him alone! 1802.

### TO A BUTTERFLY

Written in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.

I've watched you now a full half-hour,  
Self-poised upon that yellow flower;  
And, little Butterfly! indeed  
I know not if you sleep or feed.  
How motionless!—not frozen seas  
More motionless! and then  
What joy awaits you, when the breeze  
Hath found you out among the trees,  
And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard-ground is ours;  
My trees they are, my Sister's flowers;  
Here rest your wings when they are weary;  
Here lodge as in a sanctuary!  
Come often to us, fear no wrong;  
Sit near us on the bough!  
We'll talk of sunshine and of song,  
And summer days, when we were young;  
Sweet childish days, that were as long  
As twenty days are now. 1802.

### FORESIGHT

Also composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.

THAT is work of waste and ruin—  
Do as Charles and I are doing!  
Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,  
We must spare them—here are many:

Look at it—the flower is small,  
Small and low, though fair as any:  
Do not touch it! summers twq  
I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the primrose, sister Anne!  
Pull as many as you can.  
—Here are daisies, take your fill;  
Pansies, and the cuckoo-flower:  
Of the lofty daffodil  
Make your bed, or make your bower;  
Fill your lap, and fill your bosom;  
Only spare the strawberry-blossom!

Primroses, the Spring may love them—  
Summer knows but little of them:  
Violets, a barren kind,  
Withered on the ground must lie;  
Daisies leave no fruit behind  
When the pretty flowerets die;  
Pluck them, and another year  
As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power  
To the favoured strawberry-flower.  
Hither soon as spring is fled  
You and Charles and I will walk;  
Lurking berries, ripe and red,  
Then will hang on every stalk,  
Each within its leafy bower;  
And for that promise spare the flower!

1802.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE<sup>1</sup>

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. It is remarkable that this flower, coming out so early in the spring as it does, and so bright and beautiful, and in such profusion, should not have been noticed earlier in English verse. What adds much to the interest that attends it is its habit of shutting itself up and opening out according to the degree of light and temperature of the air.

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,  
Let them live upon their praises;  
Long as there's a sun that sets,  
Primroses will have their glory;  
Long as there are violets,  
They will have a place in story:  
There's a flower that shall be mine,  
'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far  
For the finding of a star;

<sup>1</sup> Common Pilewort.

Up and down the heavens they go,  
Men that keep a mighty rout!  
I'm as great as they, I trow,  
Since the day I found thee out,  
Little Flower!—I'll make a stir,  
Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf  
Bold, and lavish of thyself;  
Since we needs must first have met  
I have seen thee, high and low,  
Thirty years or more, and yet  
'Twas a face I did not know;  
Thou hast now, go where I may,  
Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,  
In the time before the thrush  
Has a thought about her nest,  
Thou wilt come with half a call,  
Spreading out thy glossy breast  
Like a careless Prodigal;  
Telling tales about the sun,  
When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood!  
Travel with the multitude:  
Never heed them; I aver  
That they all are wanton wooers;  
But the thrifty cottager,  
Who stirs little out of doors,  
Joys to spy thee near her home;  
Spring is coming, Thou art come!

Comfort have thou of thy merit,  
Kindly, unassuming Spirit!  
Careless of thy neighbourhood,  
Thou dost show thy pleasant face  
On the moor, and in the wood,  
In the lane;—there's not a place,  
Howsoever mean it be,  
But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,  
Children of the flaring hours!  
Buttercups, that will be seen,  
Whether we will see or no;  
Others, too, of lofty mien;  
They have done as worldlings do,  
Taken praise that should be thine,  
Little, humble Celandine!

Prophet of delight and mirth,  
Ill-requested upon earth;

Herald of a mighty band,  
Of a joyous train ensuing,  
Serving at my heart's command,  
Tasks that are no tasks renewing,  
I will sing, as doth behove,  
Hymns in praise of what I love!  
1802.

### TO THE SAME FLOWER

PLEASURES newly found are sweet  
When they lie about our feet:  
February last, my heart  
First at sight of thee was glad;  
All unheard of as thou art,  
Thou must needs, I think, have had,  
Celandine! and long ago,  
Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,  
Whosoe'er the man might be,  
Who the first with pointed rays  
(Workman worthy to be sainted)  
Set the sign-board in a blaze,  
When the rising sun he painted,  
Took the fancy from a glance  
At thy glittering countenance.

Soon as gentle breezes bring  
News of winter's vanishing,  
And the children build their bowers,  
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould  
All about with full-blown flowers,  
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold!  
With the proudest thou art there,  
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure  
By myself a lonely pleasure,  
Sighed to think, I read a book  
Only read, perhaps, by me;  
Yet I long could overlook  
Thy bright coronet and Thee,  
And thy arch and wily ways,  
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week  
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek;  
While the patient primrose sits  
Like a beggar in the cold,  
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,  
Slipp'st into thy sheltering hold;  
Liveliest of the vernal train  
When ye all are out again.

Drawn by what peculiar spell,  
By what charm of sight or smell,  
Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,  
Labouring for her waxen cells,  
Fondly settle upon Thee  
Prized above all buds and bells  
Opening daily at thy side,  
By the season multiplied?

Thou art not beyond the moon,  
But a thing "beneath our shoon:"  
Let the bold Discoverer thrid  
In his bark the polar sea;  
Rear who will a pyramid;  
Praise it is enough for me,  
If there be but three or four  
Who will love my little Flower.

1802.

### RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This old Man I met a few hundred yards from my cottage; and the account of him is taken from his own mouth. I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning of the poem, while crossing over Barton Fell from Mr. Clarkson's, at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The image of the hare I then observed on the ridge of the Fell.

I

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night;  
The rain came heavily and fell in floods;  
But now the sun is rising calm and bright;  
The birds are singing in the distant woods;  
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove  
broods;  
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie  
chatters;  
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise  
of waters.

II

All things that love the sun are out of  
doors;  
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth;  
The grass is bright with rain-drops;—on  
the moors  
The hare is running races in her mirth;  
And with her feet she from the plashy  
earth  
Raises a mist, that, glittering in the sun,  
Runs with her all the way, wherever she  
doth run.

## III

I was a Traveller then upon the moor,  
 I saw the hare that raced about with joy ;  
 I heard the woods and distant waters roar ;  
 Or heard them not, as happy as a boy :  
 The pleasant season did my heart employ :  
 My old remembrances went from me  
 wholly ;  
 And all the ways of men, so vain and  
 melancholy.

## IV

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the  
 might  
 Of joy in minds that can no further go,  
 As high as we have mounted in delight  
 In our dejection do we sink as low ;  
 To me that morning did it happen so ;  
 And fears and fancies thick upon me came ;  
 Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I knew  
 not, nor could name.

## V

I heard the sky-lark warbling in the sky ;  
 And I bethought me of the playful hare :  
 Even such a happy Child of earth am I ;  
 Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;  
 Far from the world I walk, and from all  
 care ;  
 But there may come another day to me—  
 Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and  
 poverty.

## VI

My whole life I have lived in pleasant  
 thought,  
 As if life's business were a summer mood ;  
 As if all needful things would come un-  
 sought  
 To genial faith, still rich in genial good ;  
 But how can He expect that others should  
 Build for him, sow for him, and at his call  
 Love him, who for himself will take no heed  
 at all ?

## VII

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous  
 Boy,  
 The sleepless Soul that perished in his  
 pride ;  
 Of Him who walked in glory and in joy  
 Following his plough, along the mountain-  
 side :

By our own spirits are we deified :  
 We Poets in our youth begin in gladness ;  
 But thereof come in the end despondency  
 and madness.

## VIII

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,  
 A leading from above, a something given,  
 Yet it befell, that, in this lonely place,  
 When I with these untoward thoughts had  
 striven,  
 Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven  
 I saw a Man before me unawares :  
 The oldest man he seemed that ever wore  
 grey hairs.

## IX

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
 Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;  
 Wonder to all who do the same espy,  
 By what means it could thither come, and  
 whence ;  
 So that it seems a thing endued with  
 sense :  
 Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a  
 shelf  
 Of rock or sand repositeth, there to sun  
 itself ;

## X

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor  
 dead,  
 Nor all asleep—in his extreme old age :  
 His body was bent double, feet and head  
 Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;  
 As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage  
 Of sickness felt by him in times long past,  
 A more than human weight upon his frame  
 had cast.

## XI

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale  
 face,  
 Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood :  
 And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,  
 Upon the margin of that moorish flood  
 Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,  
 That heareth not the loud winds when they  
 call  
 And moveth all together, if it move at all.

## XII

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond  
 Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look

Upon the muddy water, which he conned,  
As if he had been reading in a book :  
And now a stranger's privilege I took ;  
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,  
" This morning gives us promise of a  
glorious day."

## XIII

A gentle answer did the old Man make,  
In courteous speech which forth he slowly  
drew :  
And him with further words I thus bespake,  
" What occupation do you there pursue ?  
This is a lonesome place for one like you."  
Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise  
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid  
eyes,

## XIV

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,  
But each in solemn order followed each,  
With something of a lofty utterance drest—  
Choice word and measured phrase, above  
the reach  
Of ordinary men ; a stately speech ;  
Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,  
Religious men, who give to God and man  
their dues.

## V

He told, that to these waters he had come  
To gather leeches, being old and poor :  
Employment hazardous and wearisome !  
And he had many hardships to endure :  
From pond to pond he roamed, from moor  
to moor ;  
Housing, with God's good help, by choice  
or chance,  
And in this way he gained an honest main-  
tenance.

## XVI

The old Man still stood talking by my  
side ;  
But now his voice to me was like a stream  
Scarce heard ; nor word from word could  
I divide ;  
And the whole body of the Man did seem  
Like one whom I had met with in a  
dream ;  
Or like a man from some far region sent,

To give me human strength, by apt ad-  
monishment.

## XVII

My former thoughts returned : the fear that  
kills ;  
And hope that is unwilling to be fed ;  
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills ;  
And mighty Poets in their misery dead.  
—Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,  
My question eagerly did I renew,  
" How is it that you live, and what is it  
you do ?"

## XVIII

He with a smile did then his words repeat ;  
And said, that, gathering leeches, far and  
wide  
He travelled ; stirring thus about his feet  
The waters of the pools where they abide.  
" Once I could meet with them on every  
side ;  
But they have dwindled long by slow  
decay ;  
Yet still I persevere, and find them where  
I may."

## XIX

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,  
The old Man's shape, and speech—all  
troubled me ;  
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace  
About the weary moors continually,  
Wandering about alone and silently.  
While I these thoughts within myself pur-  
sued,  
He, having made a pause, the same dis-  
course renewed.

## XX

And soon with this he other matter blended,  
Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,  
But stately in the main ; and when he  
ended,  
I could have laughed myself to scorn to  
find  
In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.  
" God," said I, " be my help and stay  
secure ;  
I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the  
lonely moor !"

## "I GRIEVED FOR BUONAPARTÉ"

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain  
 And an unthinking grief! The tenderest  
 mood  
 Of that Man's mind—what can it be? what  
 food  
 Fed his first hopes? what knowledge could  
*he* gain?  
 'Tis not in battles that from youth we  
 train  
 The Governor who must be wise and good,  
 And temper with the sternness of the brain  
 Thoughts motherly, and meek as woman-  
 hood.  
 Wisdom doth live with children round her  
 knees:  
 Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the  
 talk  
 Man holds with week-day man in the  
 hourly walk  
 Of the mind's business: these are the  
 degrees  
 By which true Sway doth mount; this is  
 the stalk  
 True Power doth grow on; and her rights  
 are these.

1802.

## A FAREWELL

Composed just before my sister and I went to  
 fetch Mrs. Wordsworth from Gallow-hill, near  
 Scarborough.

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-  
 ground,  
 Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair  
 Of that magnificent temple which doth  
 bound  
 One side of our whole vale with grandeur  
 rare;  
 Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,  
 The loveliest spot that man hath ever  
 found,  
 Farewell!—we leave thee to Heaven's  
 peaceful care,  
 Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost  
 surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,  
 And there will safely ride when we are  
 gone;

The flowering shrubs that deck our humble  
 door

Will prosper, though untended and alone:  
 Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have  
 none:

These narrow bounds contain our private  
 store

Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine  
 upon;

Here are they in our sight—we have no  
 more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and  
 bell!

For two months now in vain we shall be  
 sought:

We leave you here in solitude to dwell  
 With these our latest gifts of tender  
 thought;

Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron  
 coat,

Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, fare-  
 well!

Whom from the borders of the Lake we  
 brought,

And placed together near our rocky Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear;  
 And she will prize this Bower, this Indian  
 shed,

Our own contrivance, Building without  
 peer!

—A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly  
 bred,

Whose pleasures are in wild fields gathered,  
 With joyousness, and with a thoughtful  
 cheer,

Will come to you; to you herself will wed;  
 And love the blessed life that we lead here.

Dear Spot! which we have watched with  
 tender heed,

Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms  
 blown

Among the distant mountains, flower and  
 weed,

Which thou hast taken to thee as thy  
 own,

Making all kindness registered and known;  
 Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child  
 indeed,

Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,  
 Hast taken gifts which thou dost little  
 need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle  
Place,  
Thou hast thy wayward moods, as thou  
dost show  
To them who look not daily on thy face;  
Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost  
know,  
And say'st, when we forsake thee, "Let  
them go!"  
Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild  
race  
Of weeds and flowers, till we return be  
slow,  
And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Her tales of years gone by,  
And this sweet spring, the best beloved and  
best;  
Joy will be flown in its mortality;  
Something must stay to tell us of the rest.  
Here, thronged with primroses, the steep  
rock's breast  
Glittered at evening like a starry sky;  
And in this bush our sparrow built her  
nest,  
Of which I sang one song that will not die.

O happy Garden! whose seclusion deep  
Hath been so friendly to industrious hours;  
And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep  
Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of  
flowers,  
And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers;  
Two burning months let summer overleap,  
And, coming back with Her who will be  
ours,  
Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

1802.

## "THE SUN HAS LONG BEEN SET"

Reprinted at the request of my Sister, in whose  
presence the lines were thrown off.

This *Impromptu* appeared, many years ago,  
among the Author's poems, from which, in subse-  
quent editions, it was excluded.

THE sun has long been set,  
The stars are out by twos and threes,  
The little birds are piping yet  
Among the bushes and trees;  
There's a cuckoo, and one or two thrushes,  
And a far-off wind that rushes,  
And a sound of water that gushes,  
And the cuckoo's sovereign cry

Fills all the hollow of the sky.

Who would "go parading"  
In London, "and masquerading,"  
On such a night of June  
With that beautiful soft half-moon,  
And all these innocent blisses?  
On such a night as this is!

1802.

## COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER

BRIDGE, SEPT. 3, 1802

Written on the roof of a coach, on my way to  
France.

EARTH has not anything to show more fair:  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty:  
This City now doth, like a garment, wear  
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,  
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples  
lie

Open unto the fields, and to the sky;  
All bright and glittering in the smokeless  
air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep  
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;  
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
The river glideth at his own sweet will:  
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;  
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

COMPOSED BY THE SEA-SIDE,  
NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST 1802

FAIR Star of evening, Splendour of the  
west,  
Star of my Country!—on the horizon's  
brink  
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to  
sink  
On England's bosom; yet well pleased to  
rest,  
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest  
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I  
think,  
Should'st be my Country's emblem; and  
should'st wink,  
Bright Star! with laughter on her banners,  
drest  
In thy fierce beauty. There! that dusky  
spot  
Beneath thee, that is England; there she  
lies.

Blessings be on you both ! one hope, one lot,

One life, one glory !—I, with many a fear  
For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,  
Among men who do not love her, linger here.

#### CALAIS, AUGUST 1802

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,  
Or what is it that ye go forth to see ?  
Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low degree,

Men known, and men unknown, sick, lame,  
and blind,

Post forward all, like creatures of one kind,  
With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the knee

In France, before the new-born Majesty.  
'Tis ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,  
A seemly reverence may be paid to power ;  
But that's a loyal virtue, never sown

In haste, nor springing with a transient shower :

When truth, when sense, when liberty were flown,

What hardship had it been to wait an hour ?  
Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery prone !

#### COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS, ON THE ROAD LEADING TO ARDRES, AUGUST 7, 1802

JONES ! as from Calais southward you and I  
Went pacing side by side, this public Way  
Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous day,<sup>1</sup>

When faith was pledged to new-born Liberty :

A homeless sound of joy was in the sky :  
From hour to hour the antiquated Earth  
Beat like the heart of Man : songs, garlands,  
mirth,

Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh !  
And now, sole register that these things were,

Two solitary greetings have I heard,  
" *Good-morrow, Citizen !*" a hollow word,  
As if a dead man spake it ! Yet despair  
Touches me not, though pensive as a bird  
Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid bare.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 14th July 1790.

<sup>2</sup> See Note.

#### CALAIS, AUGUST 15, 1802

FESTIVALS have I seen that were not names :

This is young Buonaparté's natal day,  
And his is henceforth an established sway—  
Consul for life. With worship France  
proclaims

Her approbation, and with pomps and games.

Heaven grant that other Cities may be gay !  
Calais is not : and I have bent my way  
To the sea-coast, noting that each man  
frames

His business as he likes. Far other show  
My youth here witnessed, in a prouder time ;

The senselessness of joy was then sublime !  
Happy is he, who, caring not for Pope,  
Consul, or King, can sound himself to know  
The destiny of Man, and live in hope.

#### "IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING, CALM AND FREE"

This was composed on the beach near Calais,  
in the autumn of 1802.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun  
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;  
The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the  
Sea :

Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with his eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with  
me here,

If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,  
Thy nature is not therefore less divine :  
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;  
And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,  
God being with thee when we know it not.

1802.

#### ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in fee ;  
And was the safeguard of the west : the worth  
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,



Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.  
 She was a maiden City, bright and free;  
 No guile seduced, no force could violate;  
 And, when she took unto herself a Mate,  
 She must espouse the everlasting Sea.  
 And what if she had seen those glories fade,  
 Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;  
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid  
 When her long life hath reached its final  
 day:

Men are we, and must grieve when even  
 the Shade  
 Of that which once was great, is passed  
 away. 1802.

### THE KING OF SWEDEN

THE Voice of song from distant lands shall  
 call

To that great King; shall hail the crownèd  
 Youth

Who, taking counsel of unbending Truth,  
 By one example hath set forth to all  
 How they with dignity may stand; or fall,  
 If fall they must. Now, whither doth it  
 tend?

And what to him and his shall be the end?  
 That thought is one which neither can appal  
 Nor cheer him; for the illustrious Swede  
 hath done

The thing which ought to be; is raised *above*  
 All consequences: work he hath begun  
 Of fortitude, and piety, and love,  
 Which all his glorious ancestors approve:  
 The heroes bless him, him their rightful  
 son.<sup>1</sup> 1802.

### TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of  
 men!

Whether the whistling Rustic tend his  
 plough

Within thy hearing, or thy head be now  
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless  
 den;—

O miserable Chieftain! where and when  
 Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not; do  
 thou

Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:  
 Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left  
 behind

Powers that will work for thee; air, earth,  
 and skies;

There's not a breathing of the common wind  
 That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;  
 Thy friends are exultations, agonies,  
 And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

1802.

### COMPOSED IN THE VALLEY NEAR DOVER, ON THE DAY OF LAND- ING

HERE, on our native soil, we breathe once  
 more.

The cock that crows, the smoke that curls,  
 that sound

Of bells; those boys who in yon meadow-  
 ground

In white-sleeved shirts are playing; and the  
 roar

Of the waves breaking on the chalky shore;—  
 All, all are English. Oft have I looked  
 round

With joy in Kent's green vales; but never  
 found

Myself so satisfied in heart before.

Europe is yet in bonds; but let that pass,  
 Thought for another moment. Thou art  
 free,

My Country! and 'tis joy enough and  
 pride

For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the  
 grass

Of England once again, and hear and see,  
 With such a dear Companion at my side.

1802.

### SEPTEMBER 1, 1802

Among the capricious acts of tyranny that dis-  
 graced those times, was the chasing of all Negroes  
 from France by decree of the government: we  
 had a Fellow-passenger who was one of the  
 expelled.

We had a female Passenger who came  
 From Calais with us, spotless in array,—  
 A white-robed Negro, like a lady gay,  
 Yet downcast as a woman fearing blame;  
 Meek, destitute, as seemed, of hope or aim  
 She sate, from notice turning not away,  
 But on all proffered intercourse did lay  
 A weight of languid speech, or to the same  
 No sign of answer made by word or face:

Yet still her eyes retained their tropic fire,  
That, burning independent of the mind,  
Joined with the lustre of her rich attire  
To mock the Outcast.—O ye Heavens, be  
kind!  
And feel, thou Earth, for this afflicted Race!

NEAR DOVER, SEPTEMBER 1802

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood;  
And saw, while sea was calm and air was  
clear,  
The coast of France—the coast of France  
how near!  
Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.  
I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood  
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,  
A span of waters; yet what power is there!  
What mightiness for evil and for good!  
Even so doth God protect us if we be  
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters  
roll,  
Strength to the brave, and Power, and  
Deity;  
Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree  
Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the  
soul  
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER  
1802

This was written immediately after my return  
from France to London, when I could not but  
be struck, as here described, with the vanity  
and parade of our own country, especially in  
great towns and cities, as contrasted with the  
quiet, and I may say the desolation, that the  
revolution had produced in France. This must  
be borne in mind, or else the reader may think  
that in this and the succeeding Sonnets I have  
exaggerated the mischief engendered and fostered  
among us by undisturbed wealth. It would not  
be easy to conceive with what a depth of feeling  
I entered into the struggle carried on by the  
Spaniards for their deliverance from the usurped  
power of the French. Many times have I gone  
from Allan Bank in Grasmere vale, where we  
were then residing, to the top of the Raise-gap  
as it is called, so late as two o'clock in the morn-  
ing, to meet the carrier bringing the newspaper  
from Keswick. Imperfect traces of the state of  
mind in which I then was may be found in my  
Tract on the Convention of Cintra, as well as in  
these Sonnets.

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must  
look

For comfort, being, as I am, oppress'd,  
To think that now our life is only drest  
For show; mean handy-work of craftsman,  
cook,

Or groom!—We must run glittering like a  
brook

In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:  
The wealthiest man among us is the best:  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,  
This is idolatry; and these we adore:  
Plain living and high thinking are no more:  
The homely beauty of the good old cause  
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,  
And pure religion breathing household laws.

LONDON, 1802

MILTON! thou should'st be living at this  
hour:

England hath need of thee: she is a fen  
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,  
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and  
bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English dower  
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;  
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;  
And give us manners, virtue, freedom,  
power.

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart:  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like  
the sea:

Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way,  
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

"GREAT MEN HAVE BEEN  
AMONG US"

GREAT men have been among us; hands  
that penned

And tongues that uttered wisdom—better  
none:

The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,  
Young Vane, and others who called Milton  
friend.

These moralists could act and comprehend:  
They knew how genuine glory was put on;  
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone  
In splendour: what strength was, that  
would not bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France,  
'tis strange,  
Hath brought forth no such souls as we  
had then.

Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!  
No single volume paramount, no code,  
No master spirit, no determined road;  
But equally a want of books and men!

1802.

### "IT IS NOT TO BE THOUGHT OF"

It is not to be thought of that the Flood  
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea  
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity  
Hath flowed, "with pomp of waters, un-  
withstood,"

Roused though it be full often to a mood  
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,  
That this most famous Stream in bogs and  
sands

Should perish; and to evil and to good  
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung  
Armoury of the invincible Knights of old:  
We must be free or die, who speak the  
tongue

That Shakspeare spake; the faith and  
morals hold

Which Milton held.—In everything we are  
sprung

Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

1802.

### "WHEN I HAVE BORNE IN MEMORY"

WHEN I have borne in memory what has  
tamed

Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts  
depart

When men change swords for ledgers, and  
desert

The student's bower for gold, some fears  
unnamed

I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?  
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou  
art,

Verily, in the bottom of my heart,  
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.  
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find  
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men:  
And I by my affection was beguiled:  
What wonder if a Poet now and then,  
Among the many movements of his mind,  
Felt for thee as a lover or a child!

1802.

### COMPOSED AFTER A JOURNEY ACROSS THE HAMBLETON HILLS, YORKSHIRE

Composed October 4th, 1802, after a journey  
over the Hambleton Hills, on a day memorable  
to me—the day of my marriage. The horizon  
commanded by those hills is most magnificent.—  
The next day, while we were travelling in a post-  
chaise up Wensleydale, we were stopt by one of  
the horses proving restive, and were obliged to  
wait two hours in a severe storm before the post-  
boy could fetch from the inn another to supply  
its place. The spot was in front of Bolton Hall,  
where Mary Queen of Scots was kept prisoner  
soon after her unfortunate landing at Working-  
ton. The place then belonged to the Scroopes,  
and memorials of her are yet preserved there.  
To beguile the time I composed a Sonnet. The  
subject was our own confinement contrasted with  
hers; but it was not thought worthy of being  
preserved.

DARK and more dark the shades of evening  
fell;

The wished-for point was reached—but at  
an hour

When little could be gained from that rich  
dower

Of prospect, whereof many thousands tell.  
Yet did the glowing west with marvellous  
power

Salute us; there stood Indian citadel,  
Temple of Greece, and minster with its  
tower

Substantially expressed—a place for bell  
Or clock to toll from! Many a tempting  
isle,

With groves that never were imagined, lay  
'Mid seas how steadfast! objects all for  
the eye

Of silent rapture; but we felt the while  
We should forget them; they are of the  
sky,

And from our earthly memory fade away.

1802.

### STANZAS

#### WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOM- SON'S "CASTLE OF INDOLENCE"

Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Gras-  
mere, Coleridge living with us much at the time:  
his son Hartley has said, that his father's char-  
acter and habits are here preserved in a livelier  
way than in anything that has been written  
about him.

WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt One  
Whom without blame I may not overlook;  
For never sun on living creature shone  
Who more devout enjoyment with us took:  
Here on his hours he hung as on a book,  
On his own time here would he float away,  
As doth a fly upon a summer brook;  
But go to-morrow, or belike to-day,  
Seek for him,—he is fled; and whither  
none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful  
home,  
And find elsewhere his business or delight;  
Out of our Valley's limits did he roam:  
Full many a time, upon a stormy night,  
His voice came to us from the neighbouring  
height:  
Oft could we see him driving full in view  
At mid-day when the sun was shining  
bright;  
What ill was on him, what he had to do,  
A mighty wonder bred among our quiet  
crew.

Ah! piteous sight it was to see this Man  
When he came back to us, a withered  
flower,—  
Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.  
Down would he sit; and without strength  
or power  
Look at the common grass from hour to  
hour:  
And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,  
Where apple-trees in blossom made a  
bower,  
Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay;  
And, like a naked Indian, slept himself  
away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was  
Whenever from our Valley he withdrew;  
For happier soul no living creature has  
Than he had, being here the long day  
through.  
Some thought he was a lover, and did woo:  
Some thought far worse of him, and judged  
him wrong;  
But verse was what he had been wedded  
to;  
And his own mind did like a tempest strong  
Come to him thus, and drove the weary  
Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly  
guise,  
Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,  
A noticeable Man with large gray eyes,  
And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly  
As if a blooming face it ought to be;  
Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,  
Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy;  
Profound his forehead was, though not  
severe;  
Yet some did think that he had little busi-  
ness here:

Sweet heaven forfend! his was a lawful  
right;  
Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy;  
His limbs would toss about him with delight  
Like branches when strong winds the trees  
annoy.  
Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy  
To banish listlessness and irksome care;  
He would have taught you how you might  
employ  
Yourself; and many did to him repair,—  
And certes not in vain; he had inventions  
rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried:  
Long blades of grass, plucked round him  
as he lay,  
Made, to his ear attentively applied,  
A pipe on which the wind would deftly  
play;  
Glasses he had, that little things display,  
The beetle panoplied in gems and gold,  
A mailed angel on a battle-day;  
The mysteries that cups of flowers enfold,  
And all the gorgeous sights which fairies  
do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear  
His music, and to view his imagery:  
And, sooth, these two were each to the  
other dear:  
No livelier love in such a place could be:  
There did they dwell—from earthly labour  
free,  
As happy spirits as were ever seen;  
If but a bird, to keep them company,  
Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,  
As pleased as if the same had been a Maiden-  
queen.

1802.

## TO H. C.

## SIX YEARS OLD

O THOU! whose fancies from afar are  
brought;  
Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,  
And fittest to unutterable thought  
The breeze-like motion and the self-born  
carol;

Thou faery voyager! that dost float  
In such clear water, that thy boat  
May rather seem  
To brood on air than on an earthly stream;  
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,  
Where earth and heaven do make one  
imagery;

O blessed vision! happy child!  
Thou art so exquisitely wild,  
I think of thee with many fears  
For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might be  
thy guest,

Lord of thy house and hospitality;  
And Grief, uneasy lover! never rest  
But when she sate within the touch of thee.  
O too industrious folly!  
O vain and causeless melancholy!  
Nature will either end thee quite;  
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,  
Preserve for thee, by individual right,  
A young lamb's heart among the full-grown  
flocks.

What hast thou to do with sorrow,  
Or the injuries of to-morrow?  
Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn  
brings forth,

Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,  
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth;  
A gem that glitters while it lives,  
And no forewarning gives;  
But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife  
Slips in a moment out of life. 1802.

TO THE DAISY<sup>1</sup>

This and the two following were composed in  
the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere, where the bird  
was often seen as here described.

"Her<sup>2</sup> divine skill taught me this,  
That from every thing I saw  
I could some instruction draw,  
And raise pleasure to the height

<sup>1</sup> See Note.<sup>2</sup> His muse.

Through the meanest object's sight.  
By the murmur of a spring,  
Or the least bough's rustelling;  
By a Daisy whose leaves spread  
Shut when Titan goes to bed;  
Or a shady bush or tree;  
She could more infuse in me  
Than all Nature's beauties can  
In some other wiser man.'

G. WITHER.

In youth from rock to rock I went,  
From hill to hill in discontent  
Of pleasure high and turbulent,  
Most pleased when most uneasy;  
But now my own delights I make,—  
My thirst at every rill can slake,  
And gladly Nature's love partake,  
Of Thee, sweet Daisy!

Thee Winter in the garland wears  
That thinly decks his few grey hairs;  
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,  
That she may sun thee;  
Whole Summer-fields are thine by right;  
And Autumn, melancholy Wight!  
Doth in thy crimson head delight  
When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,  
Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane;  
Pleased at his greeting thee again;  
Yet nothing daunted,  
Nor grieved if thou be set at nought:  
And oft alone in nooks remote  
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,  
When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews  
The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose;  
Proud be the rose, with rains and dews  
Her head impearling,  
Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,  
Yet hast not gone without thy fame;  
Thou art indeed by many a claim  
The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,  
Or, some bright day of April sky,  
Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie  
Near the green holly,  
And wearily at length should fare;  
He needs but look about, and there  
Thou art!—a friend at hand, to scare  
His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,  
 Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,  
 Have I derived from thy sweet power  
     Some apprehension ;  
 Some steady love ; some brief delight ;  
 Some memory that had taken flight ;  
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right ;  
     Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,  
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,  
 I drink out of an humbler urn  
     A lowlier pleasure ;  
 The homely sympathy that heeds  
 The common life, our nature breeds ;  
 A wisdom fitted to the needs  
     Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,  
 When thou art up, alert and gay,  
 Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play  
     With kindred gladness :  
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest  
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest  
 Hath often eased my pensive breast  
     Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,  
 All seasons through, another debt,  
 Which I, wherever thou art met,  
     To thee am owing ;  
 An instinct call it, a blind sense ;  
 A happy, genial influence,  
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,  
     Nor whither going.

Child of the Year ! that round dost run  
 Thy pleasant course,—when day's begun  
 As ready to salute the sun  
     As lark or leveret,  
 Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;  
 Nor be less dear to future men  
 Than in old time ;—thou not in vain  
     Art Nature's favourite.<sup>1</sup> 1802.

### TO THE SAME FLOWER

WITH little here to do or see  
 Of things that in the great world be,

<sup>1</sup> See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower.

Daisy ! again I talk to thee,  
     For thou art worthy,  
 Thou unassuming Common-place  
 Of Nature, with that homely face,  
 And yet with something of a grace,  
     Which Love makes for thee !

Oft on the dappled turf at ease  
 I sit, and play with similies,  
 Loose types of things through all degrees,  
     Thoughts of thy raising :  
 And many a fond and idle name  
 I give to thee, for praise or blame,  
 As is the humour of the game,  
     While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port ;  
 Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,  
 In thy simplicity the sport  
     Of all temptations ;  
 A queen in crown of rubies drest ;  
 A starveling in a scanty vest ;  
 Are all, as seems to suit thee best,  
     Thy appellations.

A little cyclops, with one eye  
 Staring to threaten and defy,  
 That thought comes next—and instantly  
     The freak is over,  
 The shape will vanish—and behold  
 A silver shield with boss of gold,  
 That spreads itself, some faery bold  
     In fight to cover !

I see thee glittering from afar—  
 And then thou art a pretty star ;  
 Not quite so fair as many are  
     In heaven above thee !  
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,  
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;—  
 May peace come never to his nest,  
     Who shall reprove thee !

Bright *Flower* ! for by that name at last,  
 When all my reveries are past,  
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,  
     Sweet silent creature !  
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,  
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
 My heart with gladness, and a share  
     Of thy meek nature !

1802.

## TO THE DAISY

This and the other Poems addressed to the same flower were composed at Town-end, Grasmere, during the earlier part of my residence there. I have been censured for the last line but one—"thy function apostolical"—as being little less than profane. How could it be thought so? The word is adopted with reference to its derivation, implying something sent on a mission; and assuredly this little flower, especially when the subject of verse, may be regarded, in its humble degree, as administering both to moral and to spiritual purposes.

BRIGHT Flower! whose home is everywhere,

Bold in maternal Nature's care,  
And all the long year through the heir

Of joy or sorrow;  
Methinks that there abides in thee  
Some concord with humanity,  
Given to no other flower I see  
The forest thorough!

Is it that Man is soon deprest?  
A thoughtless Thing! who, once unblest,  
Does little on his memory rest,  
Or on his reason,  
And Thou would'st teach him how to find  
A shelter under every wind,  
A hope for times that are unkind  
And every season?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,  
Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,  
With friends to greet thee, or without,  
Yet pleased and willing;

Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,  
And all things suffering from all  
Thy function apostolical

In peace fulfilling. 1802.

## THE GREEN LINNET

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed

Their snow-white blossoms on my head,  
With brightest sunshine round me spread

Of spring's unclouded weather,  
In this sequestered nook how sweet  
To sit upon my orchard-seat!  
And birds and flowers once more to greet,  
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest  
In all this covert of the blest:

Hail to Thee, far above the rest

In joy of voice and pinion!  
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,  
Presiding Spirit here to-day,  
Dost lead the revels of the May;  
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,  
Make all one band of paramours,  
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,

Art sole in thy employment:  
A Life, a Presence like the Air,  
Scattering thy gladness without care,  
Too blest with any one to pair;  
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,  
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
Behold him perched in ecstasies,  
Yet seeming still to hover;  
There! where the flutter of his wings  
Upon his back and body flings  
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,  
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,  
A Brother of the dancing leaves;  
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves  
Pours forth his song in gushes;  
As if by that exulting strain  
He mocked and treated with disdain  
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,  
While fluttering in the bushes.

1803.

## YEW-TREES

Written at Grasmere. These yew-trees are still standing, but the spread of that at Lorton is much diminished by mutilation. I will here mention that a little way up the hill, on the road leading from Rosthwaite to Stonethwaite (in Borrowdale), lay the trunk of a yew-tree, which appeared as you approached, so vast was its diameter, like the entrance of a cave, and not a small one. Calculating upon what I have observed of the slow growth of this tree in rocky situations, and of its durability, I have often thought that the one I am describing must have been as old as the Christian era. The tree lay in the line of a fence. Great masses of its ruins were strewn about, and some had been rolled down the hillside and lay near the road at the

bottom. As you approached the tree, you were struck with the number of shrubs and young plants, ashes, etc., which had found a bed upon the decayed trunk and grew to no inconsiderable height, forming, as it were, a part of the hedge-row. In no part of England, or of Europe, have I ever seen a yew-tree at all approaching this in magnitude, as it must have stood. By the bye, Hutton, the old Guide, of Keswick, had been so impressed with the remains of this tree, that he used gravely to tell strangers that there could be no doubt of its having been in existence before the flood.

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,  
Which to this day stands single, in the midst

Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore;  
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands  
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched  
To Scotland's heaths; or those that crossed  
the sea

And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,  
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.  
Of vast circumference and gloom profound  
This solitary Tree! a living thing  
Produced too slowly ever to decay;  
Of form and aspect too magnificent  
To be destroyed. But worthier still of  
note

Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,  
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;  
Huge trunks! and each particular trunk a  
growth

Of intertwined fibres serpentine  
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;  
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks  
That threaten the profane;—a pillared  
shade,

Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown  
hue,

By sheddings from the pining umbrage  
tinged

Perennially—beneath whose sable roof  
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked  
With unrejoicing berries—ghostly Shapes  
May meet at noontide; Fear and trembling  
Hope,

Silence and Foresight; Death the Skeleton  
And Time the Shadow;—there to celebrate,  
As in a natural temple scattered o'er  
With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,  
United worship; or in mute repose  
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood  
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

1803.

# "WHO FANCIED WHAT A PRETTY SIGHT"

WHO fancied what a pretty sight  
This Rock would be if edged around  
With living snow-drops? circlet bright!  
How glorious to this orchard-ground!  
Who loved the little Rock, and set  
Upon its head this coronet?

Was it the humour of a child?  
Or rather of some gentle maid,  
Whose brows, the day that she was styled  
The shepherd-queen, were thus arrayed?  
Of man mature, or matron sage?  
Or old man toying with his age!

I asked—'twas whispered; The device  
To each and all might well belong:  
It is the Spirit of Paradise  
That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,  
That gives to all the self-same bent  
Where life is wise and innocent. 1803.

# "IT IS NO SPIRIT WHO FROM HEAVEN HATH FLOWN"

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. I remember  
the instant my sister, S. H., called me to the  
window of our Cottage, saying, "Look how  
beautiful is yon star! It has the sky all to itself."  
I composed the verses immediately.

It is no Spirit who from heaven hath flown,  
And is descending on his embassy;  
Nor Traveller gone from earth the heavens  
to espy!

'Tis Hesperus—there he stands with glitter-  
ing crown,

First admonition that the sun is down!  
For yet it is broad day-light: clouds pass by;  
A few are near him still—and now the sky,  
He hath it to himself—'tis all his own.

O most ambitious Star! an inquest wrought  
Within me when I recognised thy light;  
A moment I was startled at the sight:

And, while I gazed, there came to me a  
thought

That I might step beyond my natural race  
As thou seem'st now to do; might one day  
trace

Some ground not mine; and, strong her  
strength above,

My Soul, an Apparition in the place,  
Tread there with steps that no one shall  
reprove! 1803.



MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN  
SCOTLAND

1803

Mr. Coleridge, my Sister, and myself started together from Town-end to make a tour in Scotland. Poor Coleridge was at that time in bad spirits, and somewhat too much in love with his own dejection; and he departed from us, as is recorded in my Sister's Journal, soon after we left Loch Lomond. The verses that stand foremost among these Memorials were not actually written for the occasion, but transplanted from my "Epistle to Sir George Beaumont."

I

DEPARTURE FROM THE VALE OF  
GRASMERE

AUGUST 1803

THE gentlest Shade that walked Elysian  
plains

Might sometimes covet dissoluble chains;  
Even for the tenants of the zone that lies  
Beyond the stars, celestial Paradise,  
Methinks 'twould heighten joy, to overleap  
At will the crystal battlements, and peep  
Into some other region, though less fair,  
To see how things are made and managed  
there.

Change for the worse might please, incur-  
sion bold

Into the tracts of darkness and of cold;  
O'er Limbo lake with æry flight to steer,  
And on the verge of Chaos hang in fear.  
Such animation often do I find,  
Power in my breast, wings growing in my  
mind,

Then, when some rock or hill is overpast,  
Perhance without one look behind me cast.  
Some barrier with which Nature, from the  
birth

Of things, has fenced this fairest spot on  
earth.

O pleasant transit, Grasmere! to resign  
Such happy fields, abodes so calm as thine;  
Not like an outcast with himself at strife;  
The slave of business, time, or care for life,  
But moved by choice; or, if constrained in  
part,

Yet still with Nature's freedom at the  
heart;—

To cull contentment upon wildest shores,  
And luxuries extract from bleakest moors;

With prompt embrace all beauty to enfold,  
And having rights in all that we behold.  
—Then why these lingering steps?—A  
bright adieu,

For a brief absence, proves that love is  
true;

Ne'er can the way be irksome or forlorn  
That winds into itself for sweet return.

II

## AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

1803

## SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

For illustration, see my Sister's Journal. It  
may be proper to add that the second of these  
pieces, though *written* at the time, was not composed  
till many years after.

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,  
At thought of what I now behold:  
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold,  
Strike pleasure dead,  
So sadness comes from out the mould  
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,  
And thou forbidden to appear?  
As if it were thyself that's here  
I shrink with pain;  
And both my wishes and my fear  
Alike are vain.

Off weight—nor press on weight!—away  
Dark thoughts!—they came, but not to  
stay;

With chastened feelings would I pay  
The tribute due

To him, and aught that hides his clay  
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth  
He sang, his genius "glinted" forth,  
Rose like a star that touching earth,

For so it seems,  
Doth glorify its humble birth  
With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,  
The struggling heart, where be they now?—  
Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,  
The prompt, the brave,  
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low  
And silent grave.

I mourned with thousands, but as one  
 More deeply grieved, for He was gone  
 Whose light I hailed when first it shone,  
 And showed my youth  
 How Verse may build a princely throne  
 On humble truth.

Alas ! where'er the current tends,  
 Regret pursues and with it blends,—  
 Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends  
 By Skiddaw seen,—  
 Neighbours we were, and loving friends  
 We might have been ;

True friends though diversely inclined ;  
 But heart with heart and mind with mind,  
 Where the main fibres are entwined,  
 Through Nature's skill,  
 May even by contraries be joined  
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;  
 Thou "poor Inhabitant below,"  
 At this dread moment—even so—  
 Might we together  
 Have sate and talked where gowans blow,  
 Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed  
 Within my reach ; of knowledge graced  
 By fancy what a rich repast !  
 But why go on ?—  
 Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,  
 His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,  
 (Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)  
 Lies gathered to his Father's side,  
 Soul-moving sight !  
 Yet one to which is not denied  
 Some sad delight :

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed  
 Hath early found among the dead,  
 Harboured where none can be misled,  
 Wronged, or distressed ;  
 And surely here it may be said  
 That such are blest.

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace  
 Checked oft-times in a devious race,  
 May He who halloweth the place  
 Where Man is laid  
 Receive thy Spirit in the embrace  
 For which it prayed !

Sighing I turned away ; but ere  
 Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,  
 Music that sorrow comes not near,  
 A ritual hymn,  
 Chaunted in love that casts out fear  
 By Seraphim.

## III

## THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON  
 THE BANKS OF NITH, NEAR THE  
 POET'S RESIDENCE

Too frail to keep the lofty vow  
 That must have followed when his brow  
 Was wreathed—"The Vision" tells us how—  
 With holly spray,  
 He faltered, drifted to and fro,  
 And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister,  
 throng  
 Our minds when, lingering all too long,  
 Over the grave of Burns we hung  
 In social grief—  
 Indulged as if it were a wrong  
 To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme  
 Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,  
 And prompt to welcome every gleam  
 Of good and fair,  
 Let us beside this limpid Stream  
 Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight ;  
 Think rather of those moments bright  
 When to the consciousness of right  
 His course was true,  
 When Wisdom prospered in his sight  
 And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,  
 Freely as in youth's season bland,  
 When side by side, his Book in hand,  
 We went to stray,  
 Our pleasure varying at command  
 Of each sweet Lay.

How oft inspired must he have trod  
 These pathways, yon far-stretching road !  
 There lurks his home ; in that Abode,  
 With mirth elate,  
 Or in his nobly-pensive mood,  
 The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes,  
Before it humbly let us pause,  
And ask of Nature, from what cause  
And by what rules  
She trained her Burns to win applause  
That shames the Schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen  
Are felt the flashes of his pen;  
He rules 'mid winter snows, and when  
Bees fill their hives;  
Deep in the general heart of men  
His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime  
Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime,  
And all that fetched the flowing rhyme  
From genuine springs,  
Shall dwell together till old Time  
Folds up his wings?

Sweet Mercy! to the gates of Heaven  
This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven;  
The rueful conflict, the heart riven  
With vain endeavour,  
And memory of Earth's bitter leaven,  
Effaced for ever.

But why to Him confine the prayer,  
When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear  
On the frail heart the purest share  
With all that live?—  
The best of what we do and are,  
Just God, forgive!<sup>1</sup>

## IV

## TO THE SONS OF BURNS

AFTER VISITING THE GRAVE OF THEIR  
FATHER

"The Poet's grave is in a corner of the church-yard. We looked at it with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses—

"'Is there a man whose judgment clear,' etc."

*Extract from the Journal of my  
Fellow-Traveller.*

'MID crowded obelisks and urns  
I sought the untimely grave of Burns;

<sup>1</sup> See Note

Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns  
With sorrow true;  
And more would grieve, but that it turns  
Trembling to you!

Through twilight shades of good and ill  
Ye now are panting up life's hill,  
And more than common strength and skill  
Must ye display;  
If ye would give the better will  
Its lawful sway.

Hath Nature strung your nerves to bear  
Intemperance with less harm, beware!  
But if the Poet's wit ye share,  
Like him can speed  
The social hour—of tenfold care  
There will be need;

For honest men delight will take  
To spare your failings for his sake,  
Will flatter you,—and fool and rake  
Your steps pursue;  
And of your Father's name will make  
A snare for you.

Far from their noisy haunts retire,  
And add your voices to the quire  
That sanctify the cottage fire  
With service meet;  
There seek the genius of your Sire,  
His spirit greet;

Or where, 'mid "lonely heights and hows,"  
He paid to Nature tuneful vows;  
Or wiped his honourable brows  
Bedewed with toil,  
While reapers strove, or busy ploughs  
Upturned the soil;

His judgment with benignant ray  
Shall guide, his fancy cheer, your way;  
But ne'er to a seductive lay  
Let faith be given;  
Nor deem that "light which leads astray,  
Is light from Heaven."

Let no mean hope your souls enslave;  
Be independent, generous, brave;  
Your Father such example gave,  
And such revere;  
But be admonished by his grave,  
And think, and fear!

## V

## TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

AT INVERSNEDYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND

This delightful creature and her demeanour are particularly described in my Sister's Journal. The sort of prophecy with which the verses conclude has, through God's goodness, been realised; and now, approaching the close of my 73d year, I have a most vivid remembrance of her and the beautiful objects with which she was surrounded. She is alluded to in the Poem of "The Three Cottage Girls" among my Continental Memorials. In illustration of this class of poems I have scarcely anything to say beyond what is anticipated in my Sister's faithful and admirable Journal.

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower  
Of beauty is thy earthly dower!  
Twice seven consenting years have shed  
Their utmost bounty on thy head;  
And these grey rocks; that household lawn;  
Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn;  
This fall of water that doth make  
A murmur near the silent lake;  
This little bay; a quiet road  
That holds in shelter thy Abode—  
In truth together do ye seem  
Like something fashioned in a dream;  
Such Forms as from their covert peep  
When earthly cares are laid asleep!  
But, O fair Creature! in the light  
Of common day, so heavenly bright,  
I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,  
I bless thee with a human heart;  
God shield thee to thy latest years!  
Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers;  
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray  
For thee when I am far away:  
For never saw I mien, or face,  
In which more plainly I could trace  
Benignity and home-bred sense  
Ripening in perfect innocence.  
Here scattered, like a random seed,  
Remote from men, Thou dost not need  
The embarrassed look of shy distress,  
And maidenly shamefacedness:  
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear  
The freedom of a Mountaineer:  
A face with gladness overspread!  
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred!

And seemliness complete, that sways  
Thy courtesies, about thee plays;  
With no restraint, but such as springs  
From quick and eager visitings  
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach  
Of thy few words of English speech:  
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife  
That gives thy gestures grace and life!  
So have I, not unmoved in mind,  
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—  
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull  
For thee who art so beautiful?  
O happy pleasure! here to dwell  
Beside thee in some heathy dell;  
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,  
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess!  
But I could frame a wish for thee  
More like a grave reality:  
Thou art to me but as a wave  
Of the wild sea; and I would have  
Some claim upon thee, if I could,  
Though but of common neighbourhood.  
What joy to hear thee, and to see!  
Thy elder Brother I would be,  
Thy Father—anything to thee!

Now thanks to Heaven! that of its grace  
Hath led me to this lonely place.  
Joy have I had; and going hence  
I bear away my recompence.  
In spots like these it is we prize  
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes:  
Then, why should I be loth to stir?  
I feel this place was made for her;  
To give new pleasure like the past,  
Continued long as life shall last.  
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,  
Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part:  
For I, methinks, till I grow old,  
As fair before me shall behold,  
As I do now, the cabin small,  
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;  
And Thee, the Spirit of them all!

## VI

## GLEN-ALMAIN;

## OR, THE NARROW GLEN

IN this still place, remote from men,  
Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN;  
In this still place, where murmurs on  
But one meek streamlet, only one:

He sang of battles, and the breath  
Of stormy war, and violent death;  
And should, methinks, when all was past,  
Have rightfully been laid at last  
Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent  
As by a spirit turbulent;  
Where sights were rough, and sounds were  
wild,

And everything unreconciled;  
In some complaining, dim retreat,  
For fear and melancholy meet;  
But this is calm; there cannot be  
A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed?  
Or is it but a groundless creed?  
What matters it?—I blame them not  
Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot  
Was moved; and in such way expressed  
Their notion of its perfect rest.  
A convent, even a hermit's cell,  
Would break the silence of this Dell:  
It is not quiet, is not ease;  
But something deeper far than these:  
The separation that is here  
Is of the grave; and of austere  
Yet happy feelings of the dead:  
And, therefore, was it rightly said  
That Ossian, last of all his race!  
Lies buried in this lonely place.

## VII

## STEPPING WESTWARD

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking  
by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening  
after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the  
course of our Tour, we had been hospitably en-  
tertained some weeks before, we met, in one of  
the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two  
well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us, by  
way of greeting, "What, you are stepping west-  
ward?"

"What, you are stepping westward?"—  
"Yea."

—'Twould be a *wildish* destiny,  
If we, who thus together roam  
In a strange Land, and far from home,  
Were in this place the guests of Chance:  
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,  
Though home or shelter he had none,  
With such a sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold;  
Behind, all gloomy to behold;

And stepping westward seemed to be  
A kind of *heavenly* destiny:  
I liked the greeting; 'twas a sound  
Of something without place or bound;  
And seemed to give me spiritual right  
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake  
Was walking by her native lake:  
The salutation had to me  
The very sound of courtesy:  
Its power was felt; and while my eye  
Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,  
The echo of the voice enwrought  
A human sweetness with the thought  
Of travelling through the world that lay  
Before me in my endless way.

## VIII

## THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,  
Yon solitary Highland Lass!  
Reaping and singing by herself;  
Stop here, or gently pass!  
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,  
And sings a melancholy strain;  
O listen! for the Vale profound  
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt  
More welcome notes to weary bands  
Of travellers in some shady haunt,  
Among Arabian sands:  
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard  
In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,  
Breaking the silence of the seas  
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?—  
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow  
For old, unhappy, far-off things,  
And battles long ago:  
Or is it some more humble lay,  
Familiar matter of to-day?  
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,  
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang  
As if her song could have no ending;  
I saw her singing at her work,  
And o'er the sickle bending;—  
I listened, motionless and still;  
And, as I mounted up the hill  
The music in my heart I bore,  
Long after it was heard no more.

## IX

ADDRESS TO KILCHURN CASTLE,  
UPON LOCH AWE

The first three lines were thrown off at the moment I first caught sight of the Ruin from a small eminence by the wayside; the rest was added many years after.

"From the top of the hill a most impressive scene opened upon our view,—a ruined Castle on an Island (for an Island the flood had made it) at some distance from the shore, backed by a Cove of the Mountain Cruachan, down which came a foaming stream. The Castle occupied every foot of the Island that was visible to us, appearing to rise out of the water,—mists rested upon the mountain side, with spots of sunshine; there was a mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn grandeur in the mountains, and the Castle was wild, yet stately—not dismantled of turrets—nor the walls broken down, though obviously a ruin."—*Extract from the Journal of my Companion.*

CHILD of loud-throated War! the mountain Stream  
Roars in thy hearing; but thy hour of rest  
Is come, and thou art silent in thy age;  
Save when the wind sweeps by and sounds  
are caught  
Ambiguous, neither wholly thine nor theirs.  
Oh! there is life that breathes not; Powers  
there are  
That touch each other to the quick in  
modes  
Which the gross world no sense hath to  
perceive,  
No soul to dream of. What art Thou,  
from care  
Cast off—abandoned by thy rugged Sire,  
Nor by soft Peace adopted; though, in  
place  
And in dimension, such that thou might'st  
seem  
But a mere footstool to yon sovereign Lord,  
Huge Cruachan, (a thing that meaner hills  
Might crush, nor know that it had suffered  
harm;)  
Yet he, not loth, in favour of thy claims  
To reverence, suspends his own; submitting  
All that the God of Nature hath conferred,  
All that he holds in common with the stars,  
To the memorial majesty of Time

Impersonated in thy calm decay!  
Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent un-  
proved!  
Now, while a farewell gleam of evening  
light  
Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,  
Do thou, in turn, be paramount; and rule  
Over the pomp and beauty of a scene  
Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and  
woods, unite  
To pay thee homage; and with these are  
joined,  
In willing admiration and respect,  
Two Hearts, which in thy presence might  
be called  
Youthful as Spring.—Shade of departed  
Power,  
Skeleton of unfleshed humanity,  
The chronicle were welcome that should call  
Into the compass of distinct regard  
The toils and struggles of thy infant years!  
Yon foaming flood seems motionless as ice;  
Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,  
Frozen by distance; so, majestic Pile,  
To the perception of this Age, appear  
Thy fierce beginnings, softened and sub-  
dued  
And quieted in character—the strife,  
The pride, the fury uncontrollable,  
Lost on the aerial heights of the Crusades!<sup>1</sup>

## X

## ROB ROY'S GRAVE

I have since been told that I was misinformed as to the burial-place of Rob Roy. If so, I may plead in excuse that I wrote on apparently good authority, namely, that of a well-educated Lady who lived at the head of the Lake, within a mile or less of the point indicated as containing the remains of One so famous in the neighbourhood.

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known; his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterine, in one of those small pinfold-like Burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance, which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood,  
The English ballad-singer's joy!  
And Scotland has a thief as good,  
An outlaw of as daring mood;

<sup>1</sup> The tradition is, that the Castle was built by a Lady during the absence of her Lord in Palestine.

She has her brave ROB ROY!  
Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,  
And let us chant a passing stave,  
In honour of that Hero brave!

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart  
And wondrous length and strength of arm:  
Nor craved he more to quell his foes,  
Or keep his friends from harm.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave;  
Forgive me if the phrase be strong;—  
A Poet worthy of Rob Roy  
Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave;  
As wise in thought as bold in deed:  
For in the principles of things  
*He* sought his moral creed.

Said generous Rob, "What need of books?  
Burn all the statutes and their shelves:  
They stir us up against our kind;  
And worse, against ourselves.

"We have a passion—make a law,  
Too false to guide us or control!  
And for the law itself we fight  
In bitterness of soul.

"And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose  
Distinctions that are plain and few:  
These find I graven on my heart:  
*That* tells me what to do.

"The creatures see of flood and field,  
And those that travel on the wind!  
With them no strife can last; they live  
In peace, and peace of mind.

"For why?—because the good old rule  
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,  
That they should take, who have the power,  
And they should keep who can.

"A lesson that is quickly learned,  
A signal this which all can see!  
Thus nothing here provokes the strong  
To wanton cruelty.

"All freakishness of mind is checked;  
He tamed, who foolishly aspires;  
While to the measure of his might  
Each fashions his desires.

"All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall  
By strength of prowess or of wit:  
'Tis God's appointment who must sway,  
And who is to submit.

"Since, then, the rule of right is plain,  
And longest life is but a day;  
To have my ends, maintain my rights,  
I'll take the shortest way."

And thus among these rocks he lived,  
Through summer heat and winter snow:  
The Eagle, he was lord above,  
And Rob was lord below.

So was it—*would*, at least, have been  
But through untowardness of fate;  
For Polity was then too strong—  
He came an age too late;

Or shall we say an age too soon?  
For, were the bold Man living *now*,  
How might he flourish in his pride,  
With buds on every bough!

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,  
Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,  
Would all have seemed but paltry things,  
Not worth a moment's pains.

Rob Roy had never lingered here,  
To these few meagre Vales confined;  
But thought how wide the world, the times  
How fairly to his mind!

And to his Sword he would have said,  
"Do Thou my sovereign will enact  
From land to land through half the earth!  
Judge thou of law and fact!

"'Tis fit that we should do our part,  
Becoming, that mankind should learn  
That we are not to be surpassed  
In fatherly concern.

"Of old things all are over old,  
Of good things none are good enough:—  
We'll show that we can help to frame  
A world of other stuff.

"I, too, will have my kings that take  
From me the sign of life and death:  
Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,  
Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfilled,  
As *might* have been, then, thought of joy!  
France would have had her present Boast,  
And we our own Rob Roy!

Oh! say not so; compare them not;  
I would not wrong thee, Champion brave!  
Would wrong thee nowhere; least of all  
Here standing by thy grave.

For Thou, although with some wild thoughts,  
Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan!  
Hadst this to boast of; thou didst love  
The *liberty* of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live  
With us who now behold the light,  
Thou would'st have nobly stirred thyself,  
And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay,  
The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand;  
And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,  
Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh  
Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays  
Alone upon Loch Veol's heights,  
And by Loch Lomond's braes!

And, far and near, through vale and hill,  
Are faces that attest the same;  
The proud heart flashing through the eyes,  
At sound of ROB ROY's name.

## XI

## SONNET

COMPOSED AT ——— CASTLE

The Castle here mentioned was Nidpath near Peebles. The person alluded to was the then Duke of Queensbury. The fact was told me by Walter Scott.

DEGENERATE Douglas! oh, the unworthy Lord!

Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,

And love of havoc, (for with such disease Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth word

To level with the dust a noble horde,  
A brotherhood of venerable Trees,  
Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,

Beggared and outraged!—Many hearts deplored

The fate of those old Trees; and oft with pain

The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze

On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed:

For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,

And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed,

And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

## XII

## YARROW UNVISITED

See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning

"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,  
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow!"

FROM Stirling castle we had seen

The mazy Forth unravelled;

Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,

And with the Tweed had travelled;

And when we came to Clovenford,

Then said my "*winsome Marrow*,"

"Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,

And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,

Who have been buying, selling,

Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own;

Each maiden to her dwelling!

On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,

Hares couch, and rabbits burrow!

But we will downward with the Tweed,

Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Galla Water, Leader Haughs,

Both lying right before us;

And Dryburgh, where with chiming Tweed

The lintwhites sing in chorus;

There's pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land

Made blithe with plough and harrow:

Why throw away a needful day

To go in search of Yarrow?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare,

That glides the dark hills under?

There are a thousand such elsewhere

As worthy of your wonder."



—Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn

My True-love sighed for sorrow ;  
And looked me in the face, to think  
I thus could speak of Yarrow !

"Oh ! green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms,  
And sweet is Yarrow flowing !  
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,<sup>1</sup>  
But we will leave it growing.  
O'er hilly path, and open Strath,  
We'll wander Scotland thorough ;  
But, though so near, we will not turn  
Into the dale of Yarrow.

"Let beeves and home-bred kine partake  
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;  
The swan on still St. Mary's Lake  
Float double, swan and shadow !  
We will not see them ; will not go,  
To-day, nor yet to-morrow,  
Enough if in our hearts we know  
There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !  
It must, or we shall rue it :  
We have a vision of our own ;  
Ah ! why should we undo it ?  
The treasured dreams of times long past,  
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow !  
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,  
'Twill be another Yarrow !

"If Care with freezing years should come,  
And wandering seem but folly,—  
Should we be loth to stir from home,  
And yet be melancholy ;  
Should life be dull, and spirits low,  
'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,  
That Earth has something yet to show,  
The bonny holms of Yarrow !"

### XIII

#### THE MATRON OF JEDBOROUGH AND HER HUSBAND

At Jedborough, my companion and I went into private lodgings for a few days ; and the following Verses were called forth by the character and domestic situation of our Hostess.

AGE ! twine thy brows with fresh spring flowers,  
And call a train of laughing Hours ;

<sup>1</sup> See Hamilton's *Ballad* as above.

And bid them dance, and bid them sing ;  
And thou, too, mingle in the ring !  
Take to thy heart a new delight ;  
If not, make merry in despite  
That there is One who scorns thy power :—  
But dance ! for under Jedborough Tower,  
A Matron dwells who, though she bears  
The weight of more than seventy years,  
Lives in the light of youthful glee,  
And she will dance and sing with thee.

Nay ! start not at that Figure—there !  
Him who is rooted to his chair !  
Look at him—look again ! for he  
Hath long been of thy family.  
With legs that move not, if they can,  
And useless arms, a trunk of man,  
He sits, and with a vacant eye ;  
A sight to make a stranger sigh !  
Deaf, drooping, that is now his doom :  
His world is in this single room :  
Is this a place for mirthful cheer ?  
Can merry-making enter here ?

The joyous Woman is the Mate  
Of him in that forlorn estate !  
He breathes a subterraneous damp ;  
But bright as Vesper shines her lamp :  
He is as mute as Jedborough Tower :  
She jocund as it was of yore,  
With all its bravery on ; in times  
When all alive with merry chimes,  
Upon a sun-bright morn of May,  
It roused the Vale to holiday.

I praise thee, Matron ! and thy due  
Is praise, heroic praise, and true !  
With admiration I behold  
Thy gladness unsubdued and bold :  
Thy looks, thy gestures, all present  
The picture of a life well spent :  
This do I see ; and something more ;  
A strength unthought of heretofore !  
Delighted am I for thy sake ;  
And yet a higher joy partake :  
Our Human-nature throws away  
Its second twilight, and looks gay ;  
A land of promise and of pride  
Unfolding, wide as life is wide.  
Ah ! see her helpless Charge ! enclosed  
Within himself it seems, composed ;  
To fear of loss, and hope of gain,  
The strife of happiness and pain,  
Utterly dead ! yet in the guise  
Of little infants, when their eyes  
Begin to follow to and fro  
The persons that before them go,

He tracks her motions, quick or slow,  
Her buoyant spirit can prevail  
Where common cheerfulness would fail ;  
She strikes upon him with the heat  
Of July suns ; he feels it sweet ;  
An animal delight though dim !  
'Tis all that now remains for him !

The more I looked, I wondered more—  
And, while I scanned them o'er and o'er,  
Some inward trouble suddenly  
Broke from the Matron's strong black eye—  
A remnant of uneasy light,  
A flash of something over-bright !  
Nor long this mystery did detain  
My thoughts ;—she told in pensive strain  
That she had borne a heavy yoke,  
Been stricken by a twofold stroke ;  
Ill health of body ; and had pined  
Beneath worse ailments of the mind.

So be it !—but let praise ascend  
To Him who is our lord and friend !  
Who from disease and suffering  
Hath called for thee a second spring ;  
Repaid thee for that sore distress  
By no untimely joyousness ;  
Which makes of thine a blissful state ;  
And cheers thy melancholy Mate !

## XIV

“FLY, SOME KIND HARBINGER, TO  
GRASMERE-DALE !”

This was actually composed the last day of our  
tour between Dalston and Grasmere.

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-  
dale !

Say that we come, and come by this day's  
light ;

Fly upon swiftest wing round field and  
height,

But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale ;  
There let a mystery of joy prevail,  
The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,  
And Rover whine, as at a second sight  
Of near-approaching good that shall not  
fail :

And from that Infant's face let joy appear ;  
Yea, let our Mary's one companion child—  
'That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled  
With intimations manifold and dear,  
While we have wandered over wood and  
wild—

Smile on his Mother now with bolder cheer.

## XV

## THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRE-SIDE, AFTER  
RETURNING TO THE VALE OF GRASMERE

The story was told me by George Mackereth,  
for many years parish-clerk of Grasmere. He  
had been an eye-witness of the occurrence. The  
vessel in reality was a washing-tub, which the  
little fellow had met with on the shore of the  
Loch.

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,  
Have romped enough, my little Boy !  
Jane hangs her head upon my breast,  
And you shall bring your stool and rest ;  
This corner is your own.

There ! take your seat, and let me see  
That you can listen quietly :  
And, as I promised, I will tell  
That strange adventure which befell  
A poor blind Highland Boy.

A *Highland* Boy !—why call him so ?  
Because, my Darlings, ye must know  
That, under hills which rise like towers,  
Far higher hills than these of ours !  
He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight  
The sun, the day ; the stars, the night ;  
Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,  
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,  
Or woman, man, or child.

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,  
Nor had a melancholy mind ;  
For God took pity on the Boy,  
And was his friend ; and gave him joy  
Of which we nothing know.

His Mother, too, no doubt, above  
Her other children him did love :  
For, was she here, or was she there,  
She thought of him with constant care,  
And more than mother's love.

And proud she was of heart, when, clad  
In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,  
And bonnet with a feather gay,  
To Kirk he on the Sabbath day  
Went hand in hand with her.

A dog too, had he; not for need,  
But one to play with and to feed;  
Which would have led him, if bereft  
Of company or friends, and left  
Without a better guide.

And then the bagpipes he could blow—  
And thus from house to house would go;  
And all were pleased to hear and see,  
For none made sweeter melody  
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream;  
Both when he heard the eagles scream,  
And when he heard the torrents roar,  
And heard the water beat the shore  
Near which their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,  
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood;  
But one of mighty size, and strange;  
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,  
And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,  
The great Sea-water finds its way  
Through long, long windings of the hills  
And drinks up all the pretty rills  
And rivers large and strong:

Then hurries back the road it came—  
Returns, on errand still the same;  
This did it when the earth was new;  
And this for evermore will do  
As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,  
Come boats and ships that safely ride  
Between the woods and lofty rocks;  
And to the shepherds with their flocks  
Bring tales of distant lands.

And of those tales, whate'er they were,  
The blind Boy always had his share;  
Whether of mighty towns, or vales  
With warmer suns and softer gales,  
Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,  
When from the water-side he heard  
The shouting, and the jolly cheers;  
The bustle of the mariners  
In stillness or in storm.

But what do his desires avail?  
For He must never handle sail;  
Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float  
In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,  
Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,  
What sin would be upon her head  
If she should suffer this: "My Son,  
Whate'er you do, leave this undone;  
The danger is so great."

Thus lived he by Loch Leven's side  
Still sounding with the sounding tide,  
And heard the billows leap and dance,  
Without a shadow of mischance,  
Till he was ten years old.

When one day (and now mark me well,  
Ye soon shall know how this befell)  
He in a vessel of his own,  
On the swift flood is hurrying down,  
Down to the mighty Sea.

In such a vessel never more  
May human creature leave the shore!  
If this or that way he should stir,  
Woe to the poor blind Mariner!  
For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him?—Ye have seen  
The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,  
Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright;  
Gifts which, for wonder or delight,  
Are brought in ships from far.

Such gifts had those seafaring men  
Spread round that haven in the glen;  
Each hut, perchance, might have its own;  
And to the Boy they all were known—  
He knew and prized them all.

The rarest was a Turtle-shell  
Which he, poor Child, had studied well;  
A shell of ample size, and light  
As the pearly car of Amphitrite,  
That sportive dolphins drew.

And, as a Coracle that braves  
On Vaga's breast the fretful waves,  
This shell upon the deep would swim,  
And gaily lift its fearless brim  
Above the tossing surge.

And this the little blind Boy knew :  
 And he a story strange yet true  
 Had heard, how in a shell like this  
 An English Boy, O thought of bliss !  
 Had stoutly launched from shore ;

Launched from the margin of a bay  
 Among the Indian isles, where lay  
 His father's ship, and had sailed far—  
 To join that gallant ship of war,  
 In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited  
 The house that held this prize ; and, led  
 By choice or chance, did thither come  
 One day when no one was at home,  
 And found the door unbarred.

While there he sate, alone and blind,  
 That story flashed upon his mind ;—  
 A bold thought roused him, and he took  
 The shell from out its secret nook,  
 And bore it on his head.

He launched his vessel,—and in pride  
 Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side,  
 Stepped into it—his thoughts all free  
 As the light breezes that with glee  
 Sang through the adventurer's hair.

A while he stood upon his feet ;  
 He felt the motion—took his seat ;  
 Still better pleased as more and more  
 The tide retreated from the shore,  
 And sucked, and sucked him in.

And there he is in face of Heaven.  
 How rapidly the Child is driven !  
 The fourth part of a mile, I ween,  
 He thus had gone, ere he was seen  
 By any human eye.

But when he was first seen, oh me  
 What shrieking and what misery !  
 For many saw ; among the rest  
 His Mother, she who loved him best,  
 She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the child, the sightless Boy,  
 It is the triumph of his joy !  
 The bravest traveller in balloon,  
 Mounting as if to reach the moon,  
 Was never half so blessed.

And let him, let him go his way,  
 Alone, and innocent, and gay !  
 For, if good Angels love to wait  
 On the forlorn unfortunate,  
 This Child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,  
 Which from the crowd on shore was sent,  
 The cries which broke from old and young  
 In Gaelic, or the English tongue,  
 Are stifled—all is still.

And quickly with a silent crew  
 A boat is ready to pursue ;  
 And from the shore their course they take,  
 And swiftly down the running lake  
 They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace ;  
 So have ye seen the fowler chase  
 On Grasmere's clear unruffled breast  
 A youngling of the wild-duck's nest  
 With deftly-lifted oar ;

Or as the wily sailors crept  
 To seize (while on the Deep it slept)  
 The hapless creature which did dwell  
 Erewhile within the dancing shell,  
 They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made,  
 They follow, more and more afraid,  
 More cautious as they draw more near ;  
 But in his darkness he can hear,  
 And guesses their intent.

" *Lei-gha—Lei-gha* "—he then cried out,  
 "*Lei-gha—Lei-gha* "—with eager shout ;  
 Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,  
 And what he meant was, " Keep away,  
 And leave me to myself ! "

Alas ! and when he felt their hands—  
 You've often heard of magic wands,  
 That with a motion overthrow  
 A palace of the proudest show,  
 Or melt it into air :

So all his dreams—that inward light  
 With which his soul had shone so bright—  
 All vanished ;—'twas a heartfelt cross  
 To him, a heavy, bitter loss,  
 As he had ever known.

But hark ! a gratulating voice,  
With which the very hills rejoice :  
'Tis from the crowd, who tremblingly  
Have watched the event, and now can  
see

That he is safe at last.

And then, when he was brought to land,  
Full sure they were a happy band,  
Which, gathering round, did on the banks  
Of that great Water give God thanks,  
And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart  
The blind Boy's little dog took part ;  
He leapt about, and oft did kiss  
His master's hands in sign of bliss,  
With sound like lamentation.

But most of all, his Mother dear,  
She who had fainted with her fear,  
Rejoiced when waking she espies  
The Child ; when she can trust her eyes,  
And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,  
When he was in the house again :  
Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes ;  
She kissed him—how could she chastise ?  
She was too happy far.

Thus, after he had fondly braved  
The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved ;  
And, though his fancies had been wild,  
Yet he was pleased and reconciled  
To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell  
Still do they keep the Turtle-shell  
And long the story will repeat  
Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,  
And how he was preserved.

NOTE.—It is recorded in Dampier's *Voyages*, that a boy, son of the captain of a Man-of-War, seated himself in a Turtle-shell, and floated in it from the shore to his father's ship, which lay at anchor at the distance of half a mile. In deference to the opinion of a Friend, I have substituted such a shell for the less elegant vessel in which my blind Voyager did actually entrust himself to the dangerous current of Loch Leven, as was related to me by an eye-witness.

## OCTOBER 1803

ONE might believe that natural miseries  
Had blasted France, and made of it a land  
Unfit for men ; and that in one great band  
Her sons were bursting forth, to dwell at  
ease.

But 'tis a chosen soil, where sun and breeze  
Shed gentle favours : rural works are there,  
And ordinary business without care ;  
Spot rich in all things that can soothe and  
please !

How piteous then that there should be such  
dearth  
Of knowledge ; that whole myriads should  
unite

To work against themselves such fell despite :  
Should come in phrensy and in drunken  
mirth,

Impatient to put out the only light  
Of Liberty that yet remains on earth !

“ THERE IS A BONDAGE WORSE,  
FAR WORSE, TO BEAR ”

THERE is a bondage worse, far worse, to  
bear

Than his who breathes, by roof, and floor,  
and wall,

Pent in, a Tyrant's solitary Thrall :  
'Tis his who walks about in the open air,  
One of a Nation who, henceforth, must wear  
Their fetters in their souls. For who could  
be,

Who, even the best, in such condition, free  
From self-reproach, reproach that he must  
share

With Human-nature ? Never be it ours  
To see the sun how brightly it will shine,  
And know that noble feelings, manly powers,  
Instead of gathering strength, must droop  
and pine ;

And earth with all her pleasant fruits and  
flowers

Fade, and participate in man's decline.

1803.

## OCTOBER 1803

THESE times strike monied worldlings with  
dismay :

Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the  
air

With words of apprehension and despair :  
 While tens of thousands, thinking on the  
 affray,  
 Men unto whom sufficient for the day  
 And minds not stinted or untill'd are given,  
 Sound, healthy, children of the God of  
 heaven,  
 Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.  
 What do we gather hence but firmer faith  
 That every gift of noble origin  
 Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual  
 breath ;  
 That virtue and the faculties within  
 Are vital,—and that riches are akin  
 To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death?

“ENGLAND! THE TIME IS COME  
 WHEN THOU SHOULD’ST WEAN”

ENGLAND! the time is come when thou  
 should’st wean  
 Thy heart from thy emasculating food ;  
 The truth should now be better understood ;  
 Old things have been unsettled ; we have  
 seen  
 Fair seed-time, better harvest might have  
 been  
 But for thy trespasses ; and, at this day,  
 If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,  
 Aught good were destined, thou would’st  
 step between.  
 England! all nations in this charge agree :  
 ‘But worse, more ignorant in love and  
 hate,  
 Far—far more abject, is thine Enemy :  
 Therefore the wise pray for thee, though  
 the freight  
 Of thy offences be a heavy weight :  
 Oh grief that Earth’s best hopes rest all  
 with Thee ! 1803.

OCTOBER 1803

WHEN, looking on the present face of  
 things,  
 I see one Man, of men the meanest too !  
 Raised up to sway the world, to do, undo,  
 With mighty Nations for his underlings,  
 The great events with which old story rings  
 Seem vain and hollow ; I find nothing great :  
 Nothing is left which I can venerate ;  
 So that a doubt almost within me springs  
 Of Providence, such emptiness at length

Seems at the heart of all things. But,  
 great God !  
 I measure back the steps which I have  
 trod :  
 And tremble, seeing whence proceeds the  
 strength  
 Of such poor Instruments, with thoughts  
 sublime  
 I tremble at the sorrow of the time.

TO THE MEN OF KENT

OCTOBER 1803

VANGUARD of Liberty, ye men of Kent,  
 Ye children of a Soil that doth advance  
 Her haughty brow against the coast of  
 France,  
 Now is the time to prove your hardiment !  
 To France be words of invitation sent !  
 They from their fields can see the counte-  
 nance  
 Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering  
 lance  
 And hear you shouting forth your brave  
 intent.  
 Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,  
 Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath ;  
 Confirmed the charters that were yours  
 before ;—  
 No parleying now ! In Britain is one breath ;  
 We all are with you now from shore to  
 shore :—  
 Ye men of Kent, ‘tis victory or death !

IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY

An invasion being expected, October 1803.

SIX thousand veterans practised in war’s  
 game,  
 Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed  
 Against an equal host that wore the plaid.  
 Shepherds and herdsmen.—Like a whirl-  
 wind came  
 The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like  
 flame ;  
 And Garry, thundering down his mountain-  
 road,  
 Was stopped, and could not breathe be-  
 neath the load  
 Of the dead bodies.—‘Twas a day of shame  
 For them whom precept and the pedantry  
 Of cold mechanic battle do enslave.

O for a single hour of that Dundee,  
Who on that day the word of onset gave !  
Like conquest would the Men of England  
see ;  
And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

#### ANTICIPATION, OCTOBER 1803

SHOUT, for a mighty Victory is won !  
On British ground the Invaders are laid  
low ;  
The breath of Heaven has drifted them  
like snow,  
And left them lying in the silent sun,  
Never to rise again !—the work is done.  
Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful  
show  
And greet your sons ! drums beat and  
trumpets blow !  
Make merry, wives ! ye little children, stun  
Your grandame's ears with pleasure of your  
noise !  
Clap, infants, clap your hands ! Divine  
must be  
That triumph, when the very worst, the pain,  
And even the prospect of our brethren slain,  
Hath something in it which the heart  
enjoys :—  
In glory will they sleep and endless sanctity.  
1803.

#### LINES ON THE EXPECTED INVASION, 1803

COME ye—who, if (which Heaven avert !)  
the Land  
Were with herself at strife, would take your  
stand,  
Like gallant Falkland, by the Monarch's  
side,  
And, like Montrose, make Loyalty your  
pride—  
Come ye—who, not less zealous, might  
display  
Banners at enmity with regal sway,  
And, like the Pymys and Miltons of that day,  
Think that a State would live in sounder  
health  
If Kingship bowed its head to Common-  
wealth—  
Ye too—whom no discreditable fear  
Would keep, perhaps with many a fruitless  
tear,

Uncertain what to choose and how to  
steer—  
And ye—who might mistake for sober  
sense  
And wise reserve the plea of indolence—  
Come ye—whate'er your creed—O waken  
all,  
Whate'er your temper, at your Country's  
call ;  
Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)  
To have one Soul, and perish to a man,  
Or save this honoured Land from every  
Lord  
But British reason and the British sword.

#### THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE<sup>1</sup>

The character of this man was described to me, and the incident upon which the verses turn was told me, by Mr. Pool of Nether Stowey, with whom I became acquainted through our common friend, S. T. Coleridge. During my residence at Alfoxden I used to see much of him and had frequent occasions to admire the course of his daily life, especially his conduct to his labourers and poor neighbours : their virtues he carefully encouraged, and weighed their faults in the scales of charity. If I seem in these verses to have treated the weaknesses of the farmer, and his transgression, too tenderly, it may in part be ascribed to my having received the story from one so averse to all harsh judgment. After his death, was found in his escritoir a lock of grey hair carefully preserved, with a notice that it had been cut from the head of his faithful shepherd, who had served him for a length of years. I need scarcely add that he felt for all men as his brothers. He was much beloved by distinguished persons—Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Southey, Sir H. Davy, and many others ; and in his own neighbourhood was highly valued as a magistrate, a man of business, and in every other social relation. The latter part of the poem, perhaps, requires some apology as being too much of an echo to the "Reverie of Poor Susan."

'Tis not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined,  
The squeamish in taste, and the narrow of  
mind,  
And the small critic wielding his delicate pen.  
That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old  
men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide  
Town ;

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

His staff is a sceptre—his grey hairs a crown;  
And his bright eyes look brighter, set off  
by the streak  
Of the unfaded rose that still blooms on  
his cheek.

'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn,—  
'mid the joy  
Of the fields, he collected that bloom, when  
a boy,  
That countenance there fashioned, which,  
spite of a stain  
That his life hath received, to the last will  
remain.

A Farmer he was; and his house far and  
near  
Was the boast of the country for excellent  
cheer:  
How oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury  
Vale  
Of the silver-rimmed horn whence he dealt  
his mild ale!

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from ruin,  
His fields seemed to know what their  
Master was doing:  
And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow,  
and lea,  
All caught the infection—as generous as he.

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the  
bowl,—  
The fields better suited the ease of his soul:  
He strayed through the fields like an indo-  
lent wight,  
The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought; and the  
poor,  
Familiar with him, made an inn of his door:  
He gave them the best that he had; or,  
to say  
What less may mislead you, they took it  
away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on  
his farm:  
The Genius of plenty preserved him from  
harm:  
At length, what to most is a season of  
sorrow,  
His means are run out,—he must beg, or  
must borrow.

To the neighbours he went,—all were free  
with their money;  
For his hive had so long been replenished  
with honey,  
That they dreamt not of dearth;—He con-  
tinued his rounds,  
Knocked here—and knocked there, pounds  
still adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten  
pelf,  
And something, it might be, reserved for  
himself:  
Then (what is too true) without hinting a  
word,  
Turned his back on the country—and off  
like a bird.

You lift up your eyes!—but I guess that  
you frame  
A judgment too harsh of the sin and the  
shame;  
In him it was scarcely a business of art,  
For this he did all in the ease of his heart.

To London—a sad emigration I ween—  
With his grey hairs he went from the brook  
and the green;  
And there, with small wealth but his legs  
and his hands,  
As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam  
assume,—  
Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter,  
and groom;  
But nature is gracious, necessity kind,  
And, in spite of the shame that may lurk  
in his mind,

He seems ten birthdays younger, is green  
and is stout;  
Twice as fast as before does his blood run  
about;  
You would say that each hair of his beard  
was alive,  
And his fingers are busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an Old Man that leisurely  
goes  
About work that he knows, in a track that  
he knows;  
But often his mind is compelled to demur,  
And you guess that the more then his body  
must stir.



In the throng of the town like a stranger  
 is he,  
 Like one whose own country's far over the  
 sea;  
 And Nature, while through the great city  
 he hies,  
 Full ten times a day takes his heart by sur-  
 prise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is  
 young,  
 More of soul in his face than of words on  
 his tongue;  
 Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and  
 sighs,  
 And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.

What's a tempest to him, or the dry  
 parching heats?  
 Yet he watches the clouds that pass over  
 the streets;  
 With a look of such earnestness often will  
 stand,  
 You might think he'd twelve reapers at  
 work in the Strand.

Where proud Covent-garden, in desolate  
 hours  
 Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruits  
 and her flowers,  
 Old Adam will smile at the pains that have  
 made  
 Poor winter look fine in such strange  
 masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon of  
 straw,  
 Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can  
 draw;  
 With a thousand soft pictures his memory  
 will teem,  
 And his hearing is touched with the sounds  
 of a dream.

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his  
 way,  
 Thrusts his hands in a waggon, and smells  
 at the hay;  
 He thinks of the fields he so often hath  
 mown,  
 And is happy as if the rich freight were his  
 own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to re-  
 pair,—

If you pass by at morning, you'll meet with  
 him there.  
 The breath of the cows you may see him  
 inhale,  
 And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury  
 Vale.

Now farewell, old Adam! when low thou  
 art laid,  
 May one blade of grass spring up over thy  
 head;  
 And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it  
 be,  
 Will hear the wind sigh through the leaves  
 of a tree. 1803.

### TO THE CUCKOO

Composed in the orchard, Town-end, Grasmere.

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,  
 I hear thee and rejoice.  
 O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,  
 Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass  
 Thy twofold shout I hear,  
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,  
 At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,  
 Of sunshine and of flowers,  
 Thou bringest unto me a tale  
 Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!  
 Even yet thou art to me  
 No bird, but an invisible thing,  
 A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days  
 I listened to; that Cry  
 Which made me look a thousand ways  
 In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove  
 Through woods and on the green;  
 And thou wert still a hope, a love;  
 Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;  
 Can lie upon the plain  
 And listen, till I do beget  
 That golden time again.

O blessed Bird ! the earth we pace  
Again appears to be  
An unsubstantial, faery place;  
That is fit home for Thee ! 1804.

"SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF  
DELIGHT"

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The germ of this poem was four lines composed as a part of the verses on the Highland Girl. Though beginning in this way, it was written from my heart, as is sufficiently obvious.

SHE was a Phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight;  
A lovely Apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament;  
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;  
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn;  
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and way-lay.

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A Spirit, yet a Woman too !  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin-liberty;  
A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet;  
A Creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food;  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine;  
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A Traveller between life and death;  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command;  
And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of angelic light. 1804.

"I WANDERED LONELY AS  
A CLOUD"

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The Daffodils grew and still grow on the margin

of Ullswater, and probably may be seen to this day as beautiful in the month of March, nodding their golden heads beside the dancing and foaming waves.

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the milky way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company:  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils. 1804.

THE AFFLICTION OF  
MARGARET —

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. This was taken from the case of a poor widow who lived in the town of Penrith. Her sorrow was well known to Mrs. Wordsworth, to my Sister, and, I believe, to the whole town. She kept a shop, and when she saw a stranger passing by, she was in the habit of going out into the street to enquire of him after her son.

I

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,  
Where art thou, worse to me than dead ?  
Oh find me, prosperous or undone !  
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,  
Why am I ignorant of the same  
That I may rest; and neither blame  
Nor sorrow may attend thy name ?

## II

Seven years, alas! to have received  
No tidings of an only child;  
To have despaired, have hoped, believed,  
And been for evermore beguiled;  
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss!  
I catch at them, and then I miss;  
Was ever darkness like to this?

## III

He was among the prime in worth,  
An object beauteous to behold;  
Well born, well bred; I sent him forth  
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold:  
If things ensued that wanted grace,  
As hath been said, they were not base;  
And never blush was on my face.

## IV

Ah! little doth the young one dream,  
When full of play and childish cares,  
What power is in his wildest scream,  
Heard by his mother unawares!  
He knows it not, he cannot guess:  
Years to a mother bring distress;  
But do not make her love the less.

## V

Neglect me! no, I suffered long  
From that ill thought; and, being blind,  
Said, "Pride shall help me in my wrong;  
Kind mother have I been, as kind  
As ever breathed:" and that is true;  
I've wet my path with tears like dew,  
Weeping for him when no one knew.

## VI

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,  
Hopeless of honour and of gain,  
Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;  
Think not of me with grief and pain:  
I now can see with better eyes;  
And worldly grandeur I despise,  
And fortune with her gifts and lies.

## VII

Alas! the fowls of heaven have wings,  
And blasts of heaven will aid their flight;  
They mount—how short a voyage brings  
The wanderers back to their delight!  
Chains tie us down by land and sea;  
And wishes, vain as mine, may be  
All that is left to comfort thee.

## VIII

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,  
Maimed, mangled by inhuman men;  
Or thou upon a desert thrown  
Inheritest the lion's den;  
Or hast been summoned to the deep,  
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep  
An incommunicable sleep.

## IX

I look for ghosts; but none will force  
Their way to me: 'tis falsely said  
That there was ever intercourse  
Between the living and the dead;  
For, surely, then I should have sight  
Of him I wait for day and night,  
With love and longings infinite.

## X

My apprehensions come in crowds;  
I dread the rustling of the grass;  
The very shadows of the clouds  
Have power to shake me as they pass;  
I question things and do not find  
One that will answer to my mind;  
And all the world appears unkind.

## XI

Beyond participation lie  
My troubles, and beyond relief:  
If any chance to heave a sigh,  
They pity me, and not my grief.  
Then come to me, my Son, or send  
Some tidings that my woes may end;  
I have no other earthly friend! 1804.

## THE FORSAKEN

This was an overflow from the "Affliction of Margaret —," and was excluded as superfluous there, but preserved in the faint hope that it may turn to account by restoring a shy lover to some forsaken damsel. My poetry has been complained of as deficient in interests of this sort,—a charge which the piece beginning, "Lyre! though such power do in thy magic live," will scarcely tend to obviate. The natural imagery of these verses was supplied by frequent, I might say intense, observation of the Rydal torrent. What an animating contrast is the ever-changing aspect of that, and indeed of every one of our mountain brooks, to the monotonous tone and unmitigated fury of such streams among the Alps as are fed all the summer long by glaciers and melting

snows. A traveller observing the exquisite purity of the great rivers, such as the Rhine at Geneva, and the Reuss at Lucerne, when they issue out of their respective lakes, might fancy for a moment that some power in nature produced this beautiful change, with a view to make amends for those Alpine sulliyings which the waters exhibit near their fountain heads; but, alas! how soon does that purity depart before the influx of tributary waters that have flowed through cultivated plains and the crowded abodes of men.

THE peace which others seek they find;  
The heaviest storms not longest last;  
Heaven grants even to the guiltiest mind  
An amnesty for what is past;  
When will my sentence be reversed?  
I only pray to know the worst;  
And wish as if my heart would burst.

O weary struggle! silent years  
Tell seemingly no doubtful tale;  
And yet they leave it short, and fears  
And hopes are strong and will prevail.  
My calmest faith escapes not pain;  
And, feeling that the hope is vain,  
I think that he will come again. 1804.

## REPENTANCE

### A PASTORAL BALLAD

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Suggested by the conversation of our next neighbour, Margaret Ashburner.

THE fields which with covetous spirit we  
sold,  
Those beautiful fields, the delight of the  
day,  
Would have brought us more good than a  
burthen of gold,  
Could we but have been as contented as  
they.

When the troublesome Tempter beset us,  
said I,  
"Let him come, with his purse proudly  
grasped in his hand;  
But, Allan, be true to me, Allan,—we'll die  
Before he shall go with an inch of the  
land!"

There dwelt we, as happy as birds in their  
bowers;  
Unfettered as bees that in gardens abide;

We could do what we liked with the land,  
it was ours;  
And for us the brook murmured that ran  
by its side.

But now we are strangers, go early or late;  
And often, like one overburthened with sin,  
With my hand on the latch of the half-  
opened gate,  
I look at the fields, but I cannot go in!

When I walk by the hedge on a bright  
summer's day,  
Or sit in the shade of my grandfather's  
tree,  
A stern face it puts on, as if ready to say,  
"What ails you, that you must come  
creeping to me!"

With our pastures about us, we could not  
be sad;  
Our comfort was near if we ever were  
crost;  
But the comfort, the blessings, and wealth  
that we had,  
We slighted them all,—and our birth-right  
was lost.

Oh, ill-judging sire of an innocent son  
Who must now be a wanderer! but peace  
to that strain!  
Think of evening's repose when our labour  
was done,  
The sabbath's return; and its leisure's soft  
chain!

And in sickness, if night had been sparing  
of sleep,  
How cheerful, at sunrise, the hill where I  
stood,  
Looking down on the kine, and our treasure  
of sheep  
That besprinkled the field; 'twas like youth  
in my blood!

Now I cleave to the house, and am dull as  
a snail;  
And, oftentimes, hear the church-bell with  
a sigh,  
That follows the thought—We've no land  
in the vale,  
Save six feet of earth where our forefathers  
lie! 1804.

THE SEVEN SISTERS;<sup>1</sup>

OR, THE SOLITUDE OF BINNORIE

## I

SEVEN Daughters had Lord Archibald,  
 All children of one mother :  
 You could not say in one short day  
 What love they bore each other.  
 A garland, of seven lilies, wrought !  
 Seven Sisters that together dwell ;  
 But he, bold Knight as ever fought,  
 Their Father, took of them no thought,  
 He loved the wars so well.  
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
 The solitude of Binnorie !

## II

Fresh blows the wind, a western wind,  
 And from the shores of Erin,  
 Across the wave, a Rover brave  
 To Binnorie is steering :  
 Right onward to the Scottish strand  
 The gallant ship is borne ;  
 The warriors leap upon the land,  
 And hark ! the Leader of the band  
 Hath blown his bugle horn.  
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
 The solitude of Binnorie.

## III

Beside a grotto of their own,  
 With boughs above them closing,  
 The Seven are laid, and in the shade  
 They lie like fawns reposing.  
 But now, upstarting with affright  
 At noise of man and steed,  
 Away they fly to left, to right—  
 Of your fair household, Father-knight,  
 Methinks you take small heed !  
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
 The solitude of Binnorie.

## IV

Away the seven fair Campbells fly,  
 And, over hill and hollow,  
 With menace proud, and insult loud,  
 The youthful Rovers follow.  
 Cried they, "Your Father loves to roam :  
 Enough for him to find  
 The empty house when he comes home ;

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

For us your yellow ringlets comb,  
 For us be fair and kind !"  
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
 The solitude of Binnorie.

## V

Some close behind, some side to side,  
 Like clouds in stormy weather ;  
 They run, and cry, "Nay, let us die,  
 And let us die together."  
 A lake was near ; the shore was steep ;  
 There never foot had been ;  
 They ran, and with a desperate leap  
 Together plunged into the deep,  
 Nor ever more were seen.  
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
 The solitude of Binnorie.

## VI

The stream that flows out of the lake,  
 As through the glen it rambles,  
 Repeats a moan o'er moss and stone,  
 For those seven lovely Campbells.  
 Seven little Islands, green and bare,  
 Have risen from out the deep :  
 The fishers say, those sisters fair,  
 By faeries all are buried there,  
 And there together sleep.  
 Sing, mournfully, oh ! mournfully,  
 The solitude of Binnorie. 1804.

ADDRESS TO MY INFANT  
DAUGHTER, DORA

ON BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A  
 MONTH OLD THAT DAY, SEPTEMBER 16

—HAST thou then survived—  
 Mild Offspring of infirm humanity,  
 Meek Infant ! among all forlornest things  
 The most forlorn—one life of that bright  
 star,  
 The second glory of the Heavens?—Thou  
 hast,  
 Already hast survived that great decay,  
 That transformation through the wide earth  
 felt,  
 And by all nations. In that Being's sight  
 From whom the Race of human kind pro-  
 ceed,  
 A thousand years are but as yesterday ;  
 And one day's narrow circuit is to Him

Not less capacious than a thousand years.  
But what is time? What outward glory?  
neither

A measure is of Thee, whose claims extend  
Through "heaven's eternal year."—Yet  
hail to Thee,

Frail, feeble Monthling!—by that name,  
methinks,

Thy scanty breathing-time is portioned out  
Not idly.—Hadst thou been of Indian birth,  
Couched on a casual bed of moss and leaves,  
And rudely canopied by leafy boughs,  
Or to the churlish elements exposed  
On the blank plains,—the coldness of the  
night,

Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful face  
Of beauty, by the changing moon adorned,  
Would, with imperious admonition, then  
Have scored thine age, and punctually  
timed

Thine infant history, on the minds of those  
Who might have wandered with thee.—  
Mother's love,

Nor less than mother's love in other breasts,  
Will, among us warm-clad and warmly  
housed,

Do for thee what the finger of the heavens  
Doth all too often harshly execute  
For thy unblest coevals, amid wilds  
Where fancy hath small liberty to grace  
The affections, to exalt them or refine;  
And the maternal sympathy itself,  
Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless  
tie

Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.  
Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours!  
Even now—to solemnise thy helpless state,  
And to enliven in the mind's regard  
Thy passive beauty—parallels have risen,  
Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,  
Within the region of a father's thoughts,  
Thee and thy mate and sister of the sky.  
And first;—thy sinless progress, through a  
world

By sorrow darkened and by care disturbed,  
Apt likeness bears to hers, through gathered  
clouds,

Moving untouched in silver purity,  
And cheering oft-times their reluctant gloom.  
Fair are ye both, and both are free from  
stain:

But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy horn  
With brightness! leaving her to post along,  
And range about, disquieted in change,

And still impatient of the shape she wears.  
Once up, once down the hill, one journey,  
Babe,

That will suffice thee; and it seems that  
now

Thou hast fore-knowledge that such task is  
thine;

Thou travellest so contentedly, and sleep'st  
In such a heedless peace. Alas! full soon  
Hath this conception, grateful to behold,  
Changed countenance, like an object sullied  
o'er

By breathing mist; and thine appears to be  
A mournful labour, while to her is given  
Hope, and a renovation without end.

—That smile forbids the thought; for on  
thy face

Smiles are beginning, like the beams of  
dawn,

To shoot and circulate; smiles have there  
been seen

Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports  
The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers  
Thy loneliness: or shall those smiles be  
called

Feelers of love, put forth as if to explore  
This untried world, and to prepare thy  
way

Through a strait passage intricate and dim?  
Such are they; and the same are tokens,  
signs,

Which, when the appointed season hath  
arrived,

Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt;  
And Reason's godlike Power be proud to  
own. 1804.

### THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES

Seen at Town-end, Grasmere. The elder-bush  
has long since disappeared: it hung over the wall  
near the Cottage; and the Kitten continued to  
leap up, catching the leaves as here described.  
The infant was Dora.

THAT way look, my Infant, lo!  
What a pretty baby-show!  
See the Kitten on the wall,  
Sporting with the leaves that fall,  
Withered leaves—one—two—and three—  
From the lofty elder-tree!  
Through the calm and frosty air  
Of this morning bright and fair,

Eddying round and round they sink  
Softly, slowly: one might think,  
From the motions that are made,  
Every little leaf conveyed  
Sylph or Faery hither tending,—  
To this lower world descending,  
Each invisible and mute,  
In his wavering parachute.  
—But the Kitten, how she starts,  
Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts!  
First at one, and then its fellow  
Just as light and just as yellow;  
There are many now—now one—  
Now they stop and there are none.  
What intenseness of desire  
In her upward eye of fire!  
With a tiger-leap half-way  
Now she meets the coming prey,  
Lets it go as fast, and then  
Has it in her power again:  
Now she works with three or four,  
Like an Indian conjurer;  
Quick as he in feats of art,  
Far beyond in joy of heart.  
Were her antics played in the eye  
Of a thousand standers-by,  
Clapping hands with shout and stare,  
What would little Tabby care  
For the plaudits of the crowd?  
Over happy to be proud,  
Over wealthy in the treasure  
Of her own exceeding pleasure!  
'Tis a pretty baby-treat;  
Nor, I deem, for me unmeet;  
Here, for neither Babe nor me,  
Other play-mate can I see.  
Of the countless living things,  
That with stir of feet and wings  
(In the sun or under shade,  
Upon bough or grassy blade)  
And with busy revellings,  
Chirp and song, and murmurings,  
Made this orchard's narrow space,  
And this vale so blithe a place;  
Multitudes are swept away  
Never more to breathe the day:  
Some are sleeping; some in bands  
Travelled into distant lands;  
Others slunk to moor and wood,  
Far from human neighbourhood;  
And, among the Kinds that keep  
With us closer fellowship,  
With us openly abide,  
All have laid their mirth aside.

Where is he that giddy Sprite,  
Blue-cap, with his colours bright,  
Who was blest as bird could be,  
Feeding in the apple-tree;  
Made such wanton spoil and rout,  
Turning blossoms inside out;  
Hung—head pointing towards the ground—  
Fluttered, perched, into a round  
Bound himself, and then unbound;  
Lithest, gaudiest Harlequin!  
Prettiest Tumbler ever seen!  
Light of heart and light of limb;  
What is now become of Him?  
Lambs, that through the mountains went  
Frisking, bleating merriment,  
When the year was in its prime,  
They are sobered by this time.  
If you look to vale or hill,  
If you listen, all is still,  
Save a little neighbouring rill,  
That from out the rocky ground  
Strikes a solitary sound.  
Vainly glitter hill and plain,  
And the air is calm in vain;  
Vainly Morning spreads the lure  
Of a sky serene and pure;  
Creature none can she decoy  
Into open sign of joy:  
Is it that they have a fear  
Of the dreary season near?  
Or that other pleasures be  
Sweeter even than gaiety?  
Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell  
In the impenetrable cell  
Of the silent heart which Nature  
Furnishes to every creature;  
Whatsoever we feel and know  
Too sedate for outward show,  
Such a light of gladness breaks,  
Pretty Kitten! from thy freaks,—  
Spreads with such a living grace  
O'er my little Dora's face;  
Yes, the sight so stirs and charms  
Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,  
That almost I could repine  
That your transports are not mine,  
That I do not wholly fare  
Even as ye do, thoughtless pair!  
And I will have my careless season  
Spite of melancholy reason,  
Will walk through life in such a way  
That, when time brings on decay,  
Now and then I may possess  
Hours of perfect gladsomeness.

—Pleased by any random toy;  
 By a kitten's busy joy,  
 Or an infant's laughing eye  
 Sharing in the ecstasy;  
 I would fare like that or this,  
 Find my wisdom in my bliss;  
 Keep the sprightly soul awake,  
 And have faculties to take,  
 Even from things by sorrow wrought,  
 Matter for a jocund thought,  
 Spite of care, and spite of grief,  
 To gambol with Life's falling Leaf.

1804.

## TO THE SPADE OF A FRIEND

(AN AGRICULTURIST)

COMPOSED WHILE WE WERE LABOURING  
TOGETHER IN HIS PLEASURE-GROUND

This person was Thomas Wilkinson, a quaker by religious profession; by natural constitution of mind, or shall I venture to say, by God's grace, he was something better. He had inherited a small estate, and built a house upon it near Yanwath, upon the banks of the Emont. I have heard him say that his heart used to beat, in his boyhood, when he heard the sound of a drum and fife. Nevertheless, the spirit of enterprise in him confined itself to tilling his ground, and conquering such obstacles as stood in the way of its fertility. Persons of his religious persuasion do now, in a far greater degree than formerly, attach themselves to trade and commerce. He kept the old track. As represented in this poem, he employed his leisure hours in shaping pleasant walks by the side of his beloved river, where he also built something between a hermitage and a summer-house, attaching to it inscriptions after the manner of Shenstone at his Leasowes. He used to travel from time to time, partly from love of nature, and partly with religious friends in the service of humanity. His admiration of genius in every department did him much honour. Through his connection with the family in which Edmund Burke was educated, he became acquainted with that great man, who used to receive him with great kindness and consideration; and many times have I heard Wilkinson speak of those interesting interviews. He was honoured also by the friendship of Elizabeth Smith, and of Thomas Clarkson and his excellent wife, and was much esteemed by Lord and Lady Lonsdale, and every member of that family. Among his verses (he wrote many) are some worthy of preservation—one little poem in particular upon disturbing, by prying curiosity, a bird while hatching her

young in his garden. The latter part of this innocent and good man's life was melancholy. He became blind, and also poor by becoming surety for some of his relations. He was a bachelor. He bore, as I have often witnessed, his calamities with unflinching resignation. I will only add that, while working in one of his fields, he unearthed a stone of considerable size, then another, then two more, and, observing that they had been placed in order as if forming the segment of a circle, he proceeded carefully to uncover the soil, and brought into view a beautiful Druid's temple of perfect though small dimensions. In order to make his farm more compact, he exchanged this field for another; and, I am sorry to add, the new proprietor destroyed this interesting relic of remote ages for some vulgar purpose.

SPADE! with which Wilkinson hath tilled  
 his lands,  
 And shaped these pleasant walks by  
 Emont's side,  
 Thou art a tool of honour in my hands;  
 I press thee, through the yielding soil, with  
 pride.

Rare master has it been thy lot to know;  
 Long hast Thou served a man to reason  
 true;  
 Whose life combines the best of high and  
 low,  
 The labouring many and the resting few;

Health, meekness, ardour, quietness secure,  
 And industry of body and of mind;  
 And elegant enjoyments, that are pure  
 As nature is; too pure to be refined.

Here often hast Thou heard the Poet sing  
 In concord with his river murmuring by;  
 Or in some silent field, while time spring  
 Is yet uncheered by other minstrelsy.

Who shall inherit Thee when death has laid  
 Low in the darksome cell thine own dear  
 lord?

That man will have a trophy, humble  
 Spade!

A trophy nobler than a conqueror's sword.

If he be one that feels, with skill to part  
 False praise from true, or, greater from the  
 less,

Thee will he welcome to his hand and  
 heart,

Thou monument of peaceful happiness!



He will not dread with Thee a toilsome  
day—

Thee his loved servant, his inspiring mate !  
And, when thou art past service, worn  
away,

No dull oblivious nook shall hide thy fate.

His thrift thy uselessness will never scorn ;  
An *heir-loom* in his cottage wilt thou  
be :—

High will he hang thee up, well pleased to  
adorn

His rustic chimney with the last of Thee !  
1804.

### THE SMALL CELANDINE

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,  
That shrinks, like many more, from cold  
and rain ;

And, the first moment that the sun may  
shine,

Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again !

When hailstones have been falling, swarm  
on swarm,

Or blasts the green field and the trees  
distrest,

Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,  
In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I  
passed

And recognised it, though an altered form,  
Now standing forth an offering to the  
blast,

And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly-muttered  
voice,

"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the  
cold :

This neither is its courage nor its choice,  
But its necessity in being old.

"The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the  
dew ;

It cannot help itself in its decay ;  
Stiff in its members, withered, changed of  
hue."

And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was  
grey.

To be a Prodigal's Favourite—then, worse  
truth,

A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot !

O Man, that from thy fair and shining  
youth

Age might but take the things Youth  
needed not ! 1804.

### AT APPLETHWAITE, NEAR KESWICK

This place was presented to me by Sir George Beaumont with a view to the erection of a house upon it, for the sake of being near to Coleridge, then living, and likely to remain, at Greta Hall near Keswick. The *severe* necessities that prevented this arose from his domestic situation. This little property, with a considerable addition that still leaves it very small, lies beautifully upon the banks of a rill that gurgles down the side of Skiddaw, and the orchard and other parts of the grounds command a magnificent prospect of Derwent Water, and of the mountains of Borrowdale and Newlands. Many years ago I gave the place to my daughter.

BEAUMONT ! it was thy wish that I should  
rear

A seemly Cottage in this sunny Dell,  
On favoured ground, thy gift, where I  
might dwell

In neighbourhood with Oneto me most dear,  
That undivided we from year to year

Might work in our high Calling—a bright  
hope

To which our fancies, mingling, gave free  
scope

Till checked by some necessities severe.

And should these slacken, honoured  
BEAUMONT ! still

Even then we may perhaps in vain implore  
Leave of our fate thy wishes to fulfil.

Whether this boon be granted us or not,  
Old Skiddaw will look down upon the Spot  
With pride, the Muses love it evermore.

1804.

### TO THE SUPREME BEING

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL ANGELO

THE prayers I make will then be sweet  
indeed

If Thou the spirit give by which I pray :  
My unassisted heart is barren clay,

That of its native self can nothing feed :  
Of good and pious works thou art the seed,  
That quickens only where thou say'st it may :  
Unless Thou show to us thine own true way  
No man can find it: Father! Thou must  
lead.

Do Thou, then, breathe those thoughts  
into my mind

By which such virtue may in me be bred  
That in thy holy footsteps I may tread ;  
The fetters of my tongue do Thou unbind,  
That I may have the power to sing of thee,  
And sound thy praises everlastingly.

1804.

## ODE TO DUTY

This ode is on the model of Gray's Ode to Adversity, which is copied from Horace's Ode to Fortune. Many and many a time have I been twitted by my wife and sister for having forgotten this dedication of myself to the stern lawgiver. Transgressor indeed I have been, from hour to hour, from day to day: I would fain hope, however, not more flagrantly or in a worse way than most of my tuneful brethren. But these last words are in a wrong strain. We should be rigorous to ourselves and forbearing, if not indulgent, to others, and, if we make comparisons at all, it ought to be with those who have morally excelled us.

"Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eductus, ut non tantum rectè facere possim, sed nisi rectè facere non possim."

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God !  
O Duty ! if that name thou love  
Who art a light to guide, a rod  
To check the erring, and reprove ;  
Thou, who art victory and law  
When empty terrors overawe ;  
From vain temptations dost set free ;  
And calm'st the weary strife of frail  
humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye  
Be on them ; who, in love and truth,  
Where no misgiving is, rely  
Upon the genial sense of youth :  
Glad Hearts ! without reproach or blot  
Who do thy work, and know it not :  
Oh ! if through confidence misplaced  
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power !  
around them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,  
And happy will our nature be,

When love is an unerring light,  
And joy its own security.  
And they a blissful course may hold  
Even now, who, not unwisely bold,  
Live in the spirit of this creed ;  
Yet seek thy firm support, according to  
their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried ;  
No sport of every random gust,  
Yet being to myself a guide,  
Too blindly have reposed my trust :  
And oft, when in my heart was heard  
Thy timely mandate, I deferred  
The task, in smoother walks to stray ;  
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if  
I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,  
Or strong compunction in me wrought,  
I supplicate for thy control ;  
But in the quietness of thought :  
Me this unchartered freedom tires ;  
I feel the weight of chance-desires :  
My hopes no more must change their name,  
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear  
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;  
Nor know we anything so fair  
As is the smile upon thy face :  
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds  
And fragrance in thy footing treads ;  
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;  
And the most ancient heavens, through  
Thee, are fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power !  
I call thee : I myself commend  
Unto thy guidance from this hour ;  
Oh, let my weakness have an end !  
Give unto me, made lowly wise,  
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;  
The confidence of reason give ;  
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let  
me live ! 1805.

## TO A SKY-LARK

Up with me ! up with me into the clouds !  
For thy song, Lark, is strong ;  
Up with me, up with me into the clouds !  
Singing, singing,  
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,

Lift me, guide me till I find  
That spot which seems so to thy mind !

I have walked through wildernesses dreary  
And to-day my heart is weary ;  
Had I now the wings of a Faery,  
Up to thee would I fly.  
There is madness about thee, and joy divine  
In that song of thine ;  
Lift me, guide me high and high  
To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning  
Thou art laughing and scorning ;  
Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,  
And, though little troubled with sloth,  
Drunken Lark ! thou would'st be loth  
To be such a traveller as I.  
Happy, happy Liver,  
With a soul as strong as a mountain river  
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,  
Joy and jollity be with us both !

Alas ! my journey, rugged and uneven,  
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must  
wind ;  
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,  
As full of gladness and as free of heaven,  
I, with my fate contented, will plod on,  
And hope for higher raptures, when life's  
day is done. 1805.

### FIDELITY

The young man whose death gave occasion to this poem was named Charles Gough, and had come early in the spring to Paterdale for the sake of angling. While attempting to cross over Helvellyn to Grasmere he slipped from a steep part of the rock where the ice was not thawed, and perished. His body was discovered as is told in this poem. Walter Scott heard of the accident, and both he and I, without either of us knowing that the other had taken up the subject, each wrote a poem in admiration of the dog's fidelity. His contains a most beautiful stanza :—

" How long didst thou think that his silence was  
slumber,  
When the wind waved his garment how oft didst  
thou start."

I will add that the sentiment in the last four lines of the last stanza in my verses was uttered by a shepherd with such exactness, that a traveller, who afterwards reported his account in print, was induced to question the man whether he had read them, which he had not.

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,  
A cry as of a dog or fox ;  
He halts—and searches with his eyes  
Among the scattered rocks :  
And now at distance can discern  
A stirring in a brake of fern ;  
And instantly a dog is seen,  
Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed ;  
Its motions, too, are wild and shy ;  
With something, as the Shepherd thinks,  
Unusual in its cry :  
Nor is there any one in sight  
All round, in hollow or on height ;  
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear ;  
What is the creature doing here ?

It was a cove, a huge recess,  
That keeps, till June, December's snow ;  
A lofty precipice in front,  
A silent tarn<sup>1</sup> below !  
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,  
Remote from public road or dwelling,  
Pathway, or cultivated land ;  
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ;  
The crags repeat the raven's croak,  
In symphony austere ;  
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—  
And mists that spread the flying shroud ;  
And sunbeams ; and the sounding blast,  
That, if it could, would hurry past ;  
But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

Nor free from boding thoughts, a while  
The Shepherd stood ; then makes his way  
O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog  
As quickly as he may ;  
Nor far had gone before he found  
A human skeleton on the ground ;  
The appalled Discoverer with a sigh  
Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks  
The Man had fallen, that place of fear !  
At length upon the Shepherd's mind  
It breaks, and all is clear :  
He instantly recalled the name,  
And who he was, and whence he came ;

<sup>1</sup> Tarn is a *small* Mere or Lake, mostly high up in the mountains.

Remembered, too, the very day  
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake  
This lamentable tale I tell !  
A lasting monument of words  
This wonder merits well.  
The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,  
Repeating the same timid cry,  
This Dog, had been through three months'  
space  
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day  
When this ill-fated Traveller died,  
The Dog had watched about the spot,  
Or by his master's side :  
How nourished here through such long time  
He knows, who gave that love sublime ;  
And gave that strength of feeling, great  
Above all human estimate ! 1805.

### INCIDENT

#### CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG

This Dog I knew well. It belonged to Mrs. Wordsworth's brother, Mr. Thomas Hutchinson, who then lived at Sockburn on the Tees, a beautiful retired situation where I used to visit him and his sisters before my marriage. My sister and I spent many months there after our return from Germany in 1799.

ON his morning rounds the Master  
Goes to learn how all things fare ;  
Searches pasture after pasture,  
Sheep and cattle eyes with care ;  
And, for silence or for talk,  
He hath comrades in his walk ;  
Four dogs, each pair of different breed,  
Distinguishing two for scent, and two for speed.

See a hare before him started !  
—Off they fly in earnest chase ;  
Every dog is eager-hearted,  
All the four are in the race :  
And the hare whom they pursue,  
Knows from instinct what to do ;  
Her hope is near : no turn she makes ;  
But, like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was, and crusted  
Thinly by a one night's frost ;

But the nimble Hare hath trusted  
To the ice, and safely crost ;  
She hath crost, and without heed  
All are following at full speed,  
When, lo ! the ice, so thinly spread,  
Breaks—and the greyhound, DART, is over-head !

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW—  
See them cleaving to the sport !  
MUSIC has no heart to follow,  
Little MUSIC, she stops short.  
She hath neither wish nor heart,  
Hers is now another part :  
A loving creature she, and brave !  
And fondly strives her struggling friend to save.

From the brink her paws she stretches,  
Very hands as you would say !  
And afflicting moans she fetches,  
As he breaks the ice away.  
For herself she hath no fears,—  
Him alone she sees and hears,—  
Makes efforts with complainings ; nor gives o'er  
Until her fellow sinks to re-appear no more. 1805.

### TRIBUTE

#### TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG

LIE here, without a record of thy worth,  
Beneath a covering of the common earth !  
It is not from unwillingness to praise,  
Or want of love, that here no Stone we raise ;  
More thou deserv'st ; but *this* man gives to man,  
Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.  
Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear  
Shall find thee through all changes of the year :  
This Oak points out thy grave ; the silent tree  
Will gladly stand a monument of thee.  
We grieved for thee, and wished thy end were past ;  
And willingly have laid thee here at last :  
For thou hadst lived till everything that cheers  
In thee had yielded to the weight of years ;  
Extreme old age had wasted thee away,  
And left thee but a glimmering of the day ;

Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy knees,—

I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,  
Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,

And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.  
It came, and we were glad; yet tears were shed;

Both man and woman wept when thou wert dead;

Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,  
Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy share;

But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,

Found scarcely anywhere in like degree !  
For love, that comes wherever life and sense  
Are given by God, in thee was most intense;

A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,  
A tender sympathy, which did thee bind  
Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind:  
Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw  
A soul of love, love's intellectual law:—  
Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame;

Our tears from passion and from reason came,

And, therefore, shalt thou be an honoured name !

1805.

### TO THE DAISY

SWEET Flower! belike one day to have  
A place upon thy Poet's grave,  
I welcome thee once more:  
But He, who was on land, at sea,  
My Brother, too, in loving thee,  
Although he loved more silently,  
Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah! hopeful, hopeful was the day  
When to that Ship he bent his way,  
To govern and to guide:  
His wish was gained: a little time  
Would bring him back in manhood's prime  
And free for life, these hills to climb;  
With all his wants supplied.

And full of hope day followed day  
While that stout Ship at anchor lay  
Beside the shores of Wight;  
The May had then made all things green;

And, floating there, in pomp serene,  
That Ship was goodly to be seen,  
His pride and his delight!

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought  
The tender peace of rural thought:  
In more than happy mood  
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers!  
He then would steal at leisure hours,  
And loved you glittering in your bowers  
A starry multitude.

But hark the word!—the ship is gone;—  
Returns from her long course:—anon  
Sets sail:—in season due,  
Once more on English earth they stand:  
But, when a third time from the land  
They parted, sorrow was at hand  
For Him and for his crew.

Ill-fated Vessel!—ghastly shock!  
—At length delivered from the rock,  
The deep she hath regained;  
And through the stormy night they steer;  
Labouring for life, in hope and fear,  
To reach a safer shore—how near,  
Yet not to be attained!

"Silence!" the brave Commander cried:  
To that calm word a shriek replied,  
It was the last death-shriek.  
—A few (my soul oft sees that sight)  
Survive upon the tall mast's height;  
But one dear remnant of the night—  
For Him in vain I seek.

Six weeks beneath the moving sea  
He lay in slumber quietly;  
Unforced by wind or wave  
To quit the Ship for which he died,  
(All claims of duty satisfied;)  
And there they found him at her side;  
And bore him to the grave.

Vain service! yet not vainly done  
For this, if other end were none,  
That He, who had been cast  
Upon a way of life unmeet  
For such a gentle Soul and sweet,  
Should find an undisturbed retreat  
Near what he loved, at last—

That neighbourhood of grove and field  
To Him a resting-place should yield,

A meek man and a brave!  
 The birds shall sing and ocean make  
 A mournful murmur for *his* sake;  
 And Thou, sweet Flower, shalt sleep and  
     wake  
 Upon his senseless grave.                      1805.

## ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE  
 CASTLE, IN A STORM, PAINTED BY SIR  
 GEORGE BEAUMONT

Sir George Beaumont painted two pictures of  
 this subject, one of which he gave to Mrs.  
 Wordsworth, saying she ought to have it; but  
 Lady Beaumont interfered, and after Sir George's  
 death she gave it to Sir Uvedale Price, in whose  
 house at Foxley I have seen it.

I WAS thy neighbour once, thou rugged  
     Pile!  
 Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of  
     thee;  
 I saw thee every day; and all the while  
 Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air!  
 So like, so very like, was day to day!  
 Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was  
     there;  
 It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm! it seemed no  
     sleep;  
 No mood, which season takes away, or  
     brings:  
 I could have fancied that the mighty Deep  
 Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's  
     hand,  
 To express what then I saw; and add the  
     gleam,  
 The light that never was, on sea or land,  
 'The consecration, and the Poet's dream;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile  
 Amid a world how different from this!  
 Beside a sea that could not cease to smile;  
 On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house  
     divine  
 Of peaceful years; a chronicle of heaven;—  
 Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine  
 The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,  
 Elysian quiet, without toil or strife;  
 No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,  
 Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,  
 Such Picture would I at that time have  
     made:  
 And seen the soul of truth in every part,  
 A stedfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no  
     more;  
 I have submitted to a new control:  
 A power is gone, which nothing can restore;  
 A deep distress hath humanised my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold  
 A smiling sea, and be what I have been:  
 The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old;  
 This, which I know, I speak with mind  
     serene.

Then, Beaumont, Friend! who would have  
     been the Friend,  
 If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,  
 This work of thine I blame not, but  
     commend;  
 This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work!—yet wise and  
     well,  
 Well chosen is the spirit that is here;  
 That Hulk which labours in the deadly  
     swell,  
 This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear!

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,  
 I love to see the look with which it braves,  
 Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,  
 The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling  
     waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,  
 Housed in a dream, at distance from the  
     Kind!  
 Such happiness, wherever it be known,  
 Is to be pitted; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,  
And frequent sights of what is to be borne!  
Such sights, or worse, as are before me  
here.—

Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.  
1805.

### ELEGIAC VERSES

IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN  
WORDSWORTH,

COMMANDER OF THE E.I. COMPANY'S SHIP THE  
EARL OF ABERGAVENNY, IN WHICH HE PER-  
ISHED BY CALAMITOUS SHIPWRECK, FEB. 6,  
1805.

Composed near the Mountain track that leads  
from Grasmere through Grisdale Hawes, where  
it descends towards Paterdale.

"Here did we stop; and here looked round,  
While each into himself descends."

The point is two or three yards below the out-  
let of Grisdale tarn, on a foot-road by which a  
horse may pass to Paterdale—a ridge of Helvellyn  
on the left, and the summit of Fairfield on the  
right.

#### I

THE Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo!  
That instant, startled by the shock,  
The Buzzard mounted from the rock  
Deliberate and slow:  
Lord of the air, he took his flight;  
Oh! could he on that woeful night  
Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,  
For one poor moment's space to Thee,  
And all who struggled with the Sea,  
When safety was so near.

#### II

Thus in the weakness of my heart  
I spoke (but let that pang be still)  
When rising from the rock at will,  
I saw the Bird depart.  
And let me calmly bless the Power  
That meets me in this unknown Flower.  
Affecting type of him I mourn!  
With calmness suffer and believe,  
And grieve, and know that I must grieve,  
Not cheerless, though forlorn.

#### III

Here did we stop; and here looked round  
While each into himself descends,

For that last thought of parting Friends  
That is not to be found.  
Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,  
Our home and his, his heart's delight,  
His quiet heart's selected home.  
But time before him melts away,  
And he hath feeling of a day  
Of blessedness to come.

#### IV

Full soon in sorrow did I weep,  
Taught that the mutual hope was dust,  
In sorrow, but for higher trust,  
How miserably deep!  
All vanished in a single word,  
A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard:  
Sea—Ship—drowned—Shipwreck—so it  
came,  
The meek, the brave, the good, was gone;  
He who had been our living John  
Was nothing but a name.

#### V

That was indeed a parting! oh,  
Glad am I, glad that it is past;  
For there were some on whom it cast  
Unutterable woe.  
But they as well as I have gains;—  
From many a humble source, to pains  
Like these, there comes a mild release;  
Even here I feel it, even this Plant  
Is in its beauty ministrant  
To comfort and to peace.

#### VI

He would have loved thy modest grace,  
Meek Flower! To Him I would have said,  
"It grows upon its native bed  
Beside our Parting-place;  
There, cleaving to the ground, it lies  
With multitude of purple eyes,  
Spangling a cushion green like moss;  
But we will see it, joyful tide!  
Some day, to see it in its pride,  
The mountain will we cross."

#### VII

—Brother and Friend, if verse of mine  
Have power to make thy virtues known,  
Here let a monumental Stone  
Stand—sacred as a Shrine;

And to the few who pass this way,  
Traveller or Shepherd, let it say,  
Long as these mighty rocks endure,—  
Oh do not Thou too fondly brood,  
Although deserving of all good,  
On any earthly hope, however pure!<sup>1</sup>  
1805.

# "WHEN TO THE ATTRACTIONS OF THE BUSY WORLD."

The grove still exists, but the plantation has been walled in, and is not so accessible as when my brother John wore the path in the manner here described. The grove was a favourite haunt with us all while we lived at Town-end.

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world,  
Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen  
A habitation in this peaceful Vale,  
Sharp season followed of continual storm  
In deepest winter; and, from week to week,  
Pathway, and lane, and public road, were  
clogged

With frequent showers of snow. Upon a  
hill

At a short distance from my cottage, stands  
A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont  
To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof  
Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place  
Of refuge, with an unincumbered floor.  
Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,  
And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,  
The redbreast near me hopped; nor was I  
loth

To sympathise with vulgar coppice birds  
That, for protection from the nipping blast,  
Hither repaired.—A single beech-tree grew  
Within this grove of firs! and, on the fork  
Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's nest;  
A last year's nest, conspicuously built  
At such small elevation from the ground  
As gave sure sign that they, who in that  
house

Of nature and of love had made their home  
Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long  
Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes,  
A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain-  
flock,  
Would watch my motions with suspicious  
stare,

<sup>1</sup> The plant alluded to is the Moss Campion  
(*Silene acaulis* of Linnæus). See Note.

From the remotest outskirts of the grove,—  
Some nook where they had made their  
final stand,

Huddling together from two fears—the  
fear

Of me and of the storm. Full many an  
hour

Here did I lose. But in this grove the  
trees

Had been so thickly planted, and had  
thriven

In such perplexed and intricate array;  
That vainly did I seek, beneath their stems  
A length of open space, where to and fro  
My feet might move without concern or  
care;

And, baffled thus, though earth from day  
to day

Was fettered, and the air by storm dis-  
turbed,

I ceased the shelter to frequent,—and  
prized,

Less than I wished to prize, that calm  
recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial Spring  
returned

To clothe the fields with verdure. Other  
haunts

Meanwhile were mine; till, one bright April  
day,

By chance retiring from the glare of noon  
To this forsaken covert, there I found  
A hoary pathway traced between the trees,  
And winding on with such an easy line  
Along a natural opening, that I stood  
Much wondering how I could have sought  
in vain

For what was now so obvious. To abide,  
For an allotted interval of ease,  
Under my cottage-roof, had gladly come  
From the wild sea a cherished Visitant;  
And with the sight of this same path—  
begun,

Begun and ended, in the shady grove,  
Pleasant conviction flashed upon my mind  
That, to this opportune recess allured,  
He had surveyed it with a finer eye,  
A heart more wakeful; and had worn the  
track

By pacing here, unwearied and alone,  
In that habitual restlessness of foot  
That haunts the Sailor measuring o'er and  
o'er

His short domain upon the vessel's deck,



While she pursues her course through the dreary sea.

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's pleasant shore,  
And taken thy first leave of those green hills

And rocks that were the play-ground of thy youth,

Year followed year, my Brother! and we two,

Conversing not, knew little in what mould  
Each other's mind was fashioned; and at length,

When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,

Between us there was little other bond  
Than common feelings of fraternal love.  
But thou, a Schoolboy, to the sea hadst carried

Undying recollections! Nature there  
Was with thee; she, who loved us both,  
she still

Was with thee; and even so didst thou become

A *silent* Poet; from the solitude  
Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart

Still couchant, an inevitable ear,  
And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.

—Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone;  
Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours  
Could I withhold thy honoured name,—  
and now

I love the fir-grove with a perfect love.  
Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns  
Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong;

And there I sit at evening, when the steep  
Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful lake,

And one green island, gleam between the stems

Of the dark firs, a visionary scene!  
And, while I gaze upon the spectacle  
Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight

Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,  
My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.  
Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou,  
Muttering the verses which I muttered first  
Among the mountains, through the mid-night watch

Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel's deck

In some far region, here, while o'er my head,

At every impulse of the moving breeze,  
The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,

Alone I tread this path;—for aught I know,  
Timing my steps to thine; and, with a store

Of undistinguishable sympathies,  
Mingling most earnest wishes for the day  
When we, and others whom we love, shall meet

A second time, in Grasmere's happy Vale.  
1805.

NOTE.—This wish was not granted; the lamented Person not long after perished by shipwreck, in discharge of his duty as Commander of the Honourable East India Company's Vessel, the Earl of Abergavenny.

## LOUISA

### AFTER ACCOMPANYING HER ON A MOUNTAIN EXCURSION

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

I MET LOUISA in the shade,  
And, having seen that lovely Maid,  
Why should I fear to say  
That, nymph-like, she is fleet and strong.  
And down the rocks can leap along  
Like rivulets in May?

She loves her fire, her cottage-home;  
Yet o'er the moorland will she roam  
In weather rough and bleak;  
And, when against the wind she strains,  
Oh! might I kiss the mountain rains  
That sparkle on her cheek.

Take all that's mine "beneath the moon,"  
If I with her but half a noon  
May sit beneath the walls  
Of some old cave, or mossy nook,  
When up she winds along the brook  
To hunt the waterfalls. 1805.

## TO A YOUNG LADY

### WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING LONG WALKS IN THE COUNTRY

Composed at the same time and on the same view as "I met Louisa in the shade": indeed they were designed to make one piece.

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail !  
—There is a nest in a green dale,  
A harbour and a hold ;  
Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see  
Thy own heart-stirring days, and be  
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,  
And treading among flowers of joy  
Which at no season fade,  
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,  
Shalt show us how divine a thing  
A Woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,  
Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh,  
A melancholy slave ;  
But an old age serene and bright,  
And lovely as a Lapland night,  
Shall lead thee to thy grave. 1805.

### VAUDRACOUR AND JULIA<sup>1</sup>

Written at Town-end, Gramere. Faithfully narrated, though with the omission of many pathetic circumstances, from the mouth of a French lady, who had been an eye-and-ear-witness of all that was done and said. Many long years after, I was told that Duplignè was then a monk in the Convent of La Trappe.

The following tale was written as an Episode, in a work from which its length may perhaps exclude it. The facts are true ; no invention as to these has been exercised, as none was needed.

O HAPPY time of youthful lovers (thus  
My story may begin) O balmy time,  
In which a love-knot on a lady's brow  
Is fairer than the fairest star in heaven !  
To such inheritance of blessed fancy  
(Fancy that sports more desperately with  
minds

Than ever fortune hath been known to do)  
The high-born Vaudracour was brought,  
by years

Whose progress had a little overstepped  
His stripling prime. A town of small  
repute,

Among the vine-clad mountains of Auvergne,  
Was the Youth's birth-place. There he  
wooed a Maid

Who heard the heart-felt music of his suit

<sup>1</sup> The first four lines occur in *The Prelude*, book ix. p. 306.

With answering vows. Plebeian was the  
stock,

Plebeian, though ingenuous, the stock,  
From which her graces and her honours  
sprung :

And hence the father of the enamoured  
Youth,

With haughty indignation, spurned the  
thought

Of such alliance.—From their cradles up,  
With but a step between their several  
homes,

Twins had they been in pleasure ; after  
strife

And petty quarrels, had grown fond again ;  
Each other's advocate, each other's stay ;  
And, in their happiest moments, not content,

If more divided than a sportive pair  
Of sea-fowl, conscious both that they are  
hovering

Within the eddy of a common blast,  
Or hidden only by the concave depth  
Of neighbouring billows from each other's  
sight.

Thus, not without concurrence of an age  
Unknown to memory, was an earnest given  
By ready nature for a life of love,  
For endless constancy, and placid truth ;  
But whatsoever of such rare treasure lay  
Reserved, had fate permitted, for support  
Of their maturer years, his present mind  
Was under fascination ;—he beheld  
A vision, and adored the thing he saw.  
Arabian fiction never filled the world  
With half the wonders that were wrought  
for him.

Earth breathed in one great presence of the  
spring ;

Life turned the meanest of her implements,  
Before his eyes, to price above all gold ;  
The house she dwelt in was a sainted shrine ;  
Her chamber-window did surpass in glory  
The portals of the dawn ; all paradise  
Could, by the simple opening of a door,  
Let itself in upon him :—pathways, walks,  
Swarmed with enchantment, till his spirit  
sank,

Surcharged, within him, overblest to move  
Beneath a sun that wakes a weary world  
To its dull round of ordinary cares ;  
A man too happy for mortality !

So passed the time, till whether through  
effect

Of some unguarded moment that dissolved  
Virtuous restraint—ah, speak it, think it,  
not!

Deem rather that the fervent Youth, who  
saw

So many bars between his present state  
And the dear haven where he wished to be  
In honourable wedlock with his Love,  
Was in his judgment tempted to decline  
To perilous weakness, and entrust his cause  
To nature for a happy end of all;  
Deem that by such fond hope the Youth  
was swayed,

And bear with their transgression, when I  
add

That Julia, wanting yet the name of wife,  
Carried about her for a secret grief  
The promise of a mother.

To conceal

The threatened shame, the parents of the  
Maid

Found means to hurry her away by night,  
And unwarned, that in some distant  
spot

She might remain shrouded in privacy,  
Until the babe was born. When morning  
came

The Lover, thus bereft, stung with his loss,  
And all uncertain whither he should turn,  
Chafed like a wild beast in the toils; but  
soon

Discovering traces of the fugitives,  
Their steps he followed to the Maid's re-  
treat.

Easily may the sequel be divined—  
Walks to and fro—watchings at every  
hour;

And the fair Captive, who, whene'er she  
may,

Is busy at her casement as the swallow  
Fluttering its pinions, almost within reach,  
About the pendent nest, did thus espy  
Her Lover!—thence a stolen interview,  
Accomplished under friendly shade of  
night.

I pass the raptures of the pair;—such  
theme

Is, by innumerable poets, touched  
In more delightful verse than skill of mine  
Could fashion; chiefly by that darling  
bard

Who told of Juliet and her Romeo,  
And of the lark's note heard before its  
time,

And of the streaks that laced the severing  
clouds

In the unrelenting east.—Through all her  
courts

The vacant city slept; the busy winds,  
That keep no certain intervals of rest,  
Moved not; meanwhile the galaxy dis-  
played

Her fires, that like mysterious pulses beat  
Aloft;—momentous but uneasy bliss!  
To their full hearts the universe seemed  
hung

On that brief meeting's slender filament!

They parted; and the generous Vaudra-  
cour

Reached speedily the native threshold, bent  
On making (so the Lovers had agreed)

A sacrifice of birthright to attain  
A final portion from his father's hand;  
Which granted, Bride and Bridegroom then  
would flee

To some remote and solitary place,  
Shady as night, and beautiful as heaven,  
Where they may live, with no one to be-  
hold

Their happiness, or to disturb their love.  
But *now* of this no whisper; not the less,  
If ever an obtrusive word were dropped  
Touching the matter of his passion, still,  
In his stern father's hearing, Vaudracour  
Persisted openly that death alone  
Should abrogate his human privilege  
Divine, of swearing everlasting truth,  
Upon the altar, to the Maid he loved.

"You shall be baffled in your mad in-  
tent

If there be justice in the court of France,"  
Muttered the Father.—From these words  
the Youth

Conceived a terror; and, by night or day,  
Stirred nowhere without weapons, that full  
soon

Found dreadful provocation: for at night  
When to his chamber he retired, attempt  
Was made to seize him by three armed  
men,

Acting, in furtherance of the father's will,  
Under a private signet of the State.  
One the rash Youth's ungovernable hand  
Slew, and as quickly to a second gave  
A perilous wound—he shuddered to behold  
The breathless corse; then peacefully re-  
signed

His person to the law, was lodged in prison,

And wore the fetters of a criminal.

Have you observed a tuft of winged seed  
That, from the dandelion's naked stalk,  
Mounted aloft, is suffered not to use  
Its natural gifts for purposes of rest,  
Driven by the autumnal whirlwind to and  
fro

Through the wide element? or have you  
marked

The heavier substance of a leaf-clad bough,  
Within the vortex of a foaming flood,  
Tormented? by such aid you may conceive  
The perturbation that ensued;—ah, no!

Desperate the Maid—the Youth is stained  
with blood;

Unmatchable on earth is their disquiet!  
Yet as the troubled seed and tortured  
bough

Is Man, subjected to despotic sway.

For him, by private influence with the  
Court,

Was pardon gained, and liberty procured;  
But not without exaction of a pledge,  
Which liberty and love dispersed in air.

He flew to her from whom they would  
divide him—

He clove to her who could not give him  
peace—

Yea, his first word of greeting was,—“All  
right

Is gone from me; my lately-towering hopes,  
To the least fibre of their lowest root,  
Are withered; thou no longer canst be  
mine,

I thine—the conscience-stricken must not  
woo

The unruffled Innocent,—I see thy face,  
Behold thee, and my misery is complete!”

“One, are we not?” exclaimed the  
Maiden—“One,

For innocence and youth, for weal and  
woe?”

Then with the father's name she coupled  
words

Of vehement indignation; but the Youth  
Checked her with filial meekness; for no  
thought

Uncharitable crossed his mind, no sense  
Of hasty anger rising in the eclipse  
Of true domestic loyalty, did e'er  
Find place within his bosom.—Once again

The persevering wedge of tyranny  
Achieved their separation: and once more  
Were they united,—to be yet again

Disparted, pitiable lot! But here  
A portion of the tale may well be left  
In silence, though my memory could add  
Much how the Youth, in scanty space of  
time,

Was traversed from without; much, too,  
of thoughts

That occupied his days in solitude  
Under privation and restraint; and what,  
Through dark and shapeless fear of things  
to come,

And what, through strong compunction for  
the past,

He suffered—breaking down in heart and  
mind!

Doomed to a third and last captivity,  
His freedom he recovered on the eve  
Of Julia's travail. When the babe was  
born,

Its presence tempted him to cherish schemes  
Of future happiness. “You shall return,  
Julia,” said he, “and to your father's  
house

Go with the child.—You have been  
wretched; yet

The silver shower, whose reckless burthen  
weighs

Too heavily upon the lily's head,  
Oft leaves a saving moisture at its root.  
Malice, beholding you, will melt away.

Go!—'tis a town where both of us were  
born;

None will reproach you, for our truth is  
known;

And if, amid those once-bright bowers, our  
fate

Remain unpitied, pity is not in man.

With ornaments—the prettiest, nature  
yields

Or art can fashion, shall you deck our boy,  
And feed his countenance with your own  
sweet looks

Till no one can resist him.—Now, even  
now,

I see him sporting on the sunny lawn;  
My father from the window sees him too;  
Startled, as if some new-created thing  
Enriched the earth, or Faery of the woods  
Bounded before him;—but the unweeting  
Child

Shall by his beauty win his grandsire's heart  
So that it shall be softened, and our loves  
End happily, as they began!”

These gleams

Appeared but seldom; oftener was he seen  
Propping a pale and melancholy face  
Upon the Mother's bosom; resting thus  
His head upon one breast, while from the  
• other

The Babe was drawing in its quiet food.  
—That pillow is no longer to be thine,  
Fond Youth! that mournful solace now  
must pass

Into the list of things that cannot be!  
Unwedded Julia, terror-smitten, hears  
The sentence, by her mother's lip pronounced,

That dooms her to a convent.—Who shall  
tell,

Who dares report, the tidings to the lord  
Of her affections? so they blindly asked  
Who knew not to what quiet depths a  
weight

Of agony had pressed the Sufferer down:  
The word, by others dreaded, he can hear  
Composed and silent, without visible sign  
Of even the least emotion. Noting this,  
When the impatient object of his love  
Upbraided him with slackness, he returned  
No answer, only took the mother's hand  
And kissed it; seemingly devoid of pain,  
Or care, that what so tenderly he pressed,  
Was a dependant on the obdurate heart  
Of one who came to disunite their lives  
For ever—sad alternative! preferred,  
By the unbending Parents of the Maid,  
To secret 'spousals meanly disavowed.  
—So be it!

In the city he remained—  
A season after Julia had withdrawn  
To those religious walls. He, too, de-  
parts—

Who with him?—even the senseless Little-  
one.

With that sole charge he passed the city-  
gates,

For the last time, attendant by the side  
Of a close chair, a litter, or sedan,  
In which the Babe was carried. To a hill,  
That rose a brief league distant from the  
town,

The dwellers in that house where he had  
lodged

Accompanied his steps, by anxious love  
Impelled;—they parted from him there,  
and stood

Watching below till he had disappeared  
On the hill top. His eyes he scarcely took,

Throughout that journey, from the vehicle  
(Slow-moving ark of all his hopes!) that  
veiled

The tender infant: and, at every inn,  
And under every hospitable tree  
At which the bearers halted or reposed,  
Laid him with timid care upon his knees,  
And looked, as mothers ne'er were known  
to look,

Upon the nursing which his arms em-  
braced.

This was the manner in which Vaudracour  
Departed with his infant; and thus reached  
His father's house, where to the innocent  
child

Admittance was denied. The young man  
spake

No word of indignation or reproof,  
But of his father begged, a last request,  
That a retreat might be assigned to him  
Where in forgotten quiet he might dwell,  
With such allowance as his wants required;  
For wishes he had none. To a lodge that  
stood

Deep in a forest, with leave given, at the  
age

Of four-and-twenty summers he withdrew;  
And thither took with him his motherless  
Babe,

And one domestic for their common needs,  
An aged woman. It consoled him here  
To attend upon the orphan, and perform  
Obsequious service to the precious child,  
Which, after a short time, by some mistake  
Or indiscretion of the Father, died.—  
The Tale I follow to its last recess  
Of suffering or of peace, I know not which:  
Theirs be the blame who caused the woe,  
not mine!

From this time forth he never shared a  
smile

With mortal creature. An Inhabitant  
Of that same town, in which the pair had  
left

So lively a remembrance of their griefs,  
By chance of business, coming within reach  
Of his retirement, to the forest lodge  
Repaired, but only found the matron there,  
Who told him that his pains were thrown  
away,

For that her Master never uttered word  
To living thing—not even to her.—Behold!  
While they were speaking, Vaudracour  
approached;

But, seeing some one near, as on the latch  
Of the garden-gate his hand was laid, he  
shrank—

And, like a shadow, glided out of view.  
Shocked at his savage aspect, from the  
place  
The visitor retired.

Thus lived the Youth  
Cut off from all intelligence with man,  
And shunning even the light of common  
day;  
Nor could the voice of Freedom, which  
through France  
Full speedily resounded, public hope,  
Or personal memory of his own deep  
wrongs,  
Rouse him: but in those solitary shades  
His days he wasted, an imbecile mind!

1805.

## THE COTTAGER TO HER INFANT

BY MY SISTER

Suggested to her while beside my sleeping  
children.

THE days are cold, the nights are long,  
The north-wind sings a doleful song;  
Then hush again upon my breast;  
All merry things are now at rest,  
Save thee, my pretty Love!

The kitten sleeps upon the hearth,  
The crickets long have ceased their mirth;  
There's nothing stirring in the house  
Save one wee, hungry, nibbling mouse,  
Then why so busy thou?

Nay! start not at that sparkling light;  
'Tis but the moon that shines so bright  
On the window pane bedropped with rain:  
Then, little Darling! sleep again,  
And wake when it is day.

1805.

THE WAGGONER<sup>1</sup>

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The char-  
acters and story from fact.

In Cairo's crowded streets  
The impatient Merchant, wondering, waits in  
vain,  
And Mecca saddens at the long delay.

THOMSON.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

TO

CHARLES LAMB, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

When I sent you, a few weeks ago,  
the tale of Peter Bell, you asked "why THE  
WAGGONER was not added?"—To say the truth  
—from the higher tone of imagination, and the  
deeper touches of passion aimed at in the former,  
I apprehended this little Piece could not accom-  
pany it without disadvantage. In the year 1806,  
if I am not mistaken, THE WAGGONER was read  
to you in manuscript, and, as you have remem-  
bered it for so long a time, I am the more en-  
couraged to hope, that, since the localities on  
which the Poem partly depends did not prevent  
its being interesting to you, it may prove accept-  
able to others. Being therefore in some measure  
the cause of its present appearance, you must  
allow me the gratification of inscribing it to you;  
in acknowledgment of the pleasure I have derived  
from your Writings, and of the high esteem with  
which

I am very truly yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

*Rydal Mount, May 20, 1819.*

## CANTO FIRST

'Tis spent—this burning day of June!  
Soft darkness o'er its latest gleams is  
stealing;  
The buzzing dor-hawk, round and round,  
is wheeling,<sup>1</sup>—  
That solitary bird  
Is all that can be heard  
In silence deeper far than that of deepest  
noon!

Confiding Glow-worms, 'tis a night  
Propitious to your earth-born light!  
But, where the scattered stars are seen  
In hazy straits the clouds between,  
Each, in his station twinkling not,  
Seems changed into a pallid spot.  
The mountains against heaven's grave  
weight

Rise up, and grow to wondrous height.  
The air, as in a lion's den,  
Is close and hot;—and now and then  
Comes a tired and sultry breeze  
With a haunting and a panting,  
Like the stifling of disease;  
But the dews allay the heat,  
And the silence makes it sweet.

Q

Hush, there is some one on the stir !  
 'Tis Benjamin the Waggoner ;  
 Who long hath trod this toilsome way,  
 Companion of the night and day.  
 That far-off tinkling's drowsy cheer,  
 Mixed with a faint yet grating sound  
 In a moment lost and found,  
 The Wain announces—by whose side  
 Along the banks of Rydal Mere  
 He paces on, a trusty Guide,—  
 Listen ! you can scarcely hear !  
 Hither he his course is bending ;—  
 Now he leaves the lower ground,  
 And up the craggy hill ascending  
 Many a stop and stay he makes,  
 Many a breathing-fit he takes ;—  
 Steep the way and wearisome,  
 Yet all the while his whip is dumb !

The Horses have worked with right  
 good-will,  
 And so have gained the top of the hill ;  
 He was patient, they were strong,  
 And now they smoothly glide along,  
 Recovering breath, and pleased to win  
 The praises of mild Benjamin.  
 Heaven shield him from mishap and snare !  
 But why so early with this prayer ?—  
 Is it for threatenings in the sky ?  
 Or for some other danger nigh ?  
 No ; none is near him yet, though he  
 Be one of much infirmity ;  
 For at the bottom of the brow,  
 Where once the DOVE and OLIVE-BOUGH  
 Offered a greeting of good ale  
 To all who entered Grasmere Vale ;  
 And called on him who must depart  
 To leave it with a jovial heart ;  
 There, where the DOVE and OLIVE-BOUGH  
 Once hung, a Poet harbours now,  
 A simple water-drinking Bard ;  
 Why need our Hero then (though frail  
 His best resolves) be on his guard ?  
 He marches by, secure and bold ;  
 Yet while he thinks on times of old,  
 It seems that all looks wondrous cold ;  
 He shrugs his shoulders, shakes his head,  
 And, for the honest folk within,  
 It is a doubt with Benjamin  
 Whether they be alive or dead !

Here is no danger,—none at all !  
 Beyond his wish he walks secure ;  
 But pass a mile—and *then* for trial,—  
 Then for the pride of self-denial ;  
 If he resist that tempting door,

Which with such friendly voice will call ;  
 If he resist those casement panes,  
 And that bright gleam which thence will fall  
 Upon his Leaders' bells and manes,  
 Inviting him with cheerful lure :  
 For still, though all be dark elsewhere,  
 Some shining notice will be *there*,  
 Of open house and ready fare.

The place to Benjamin right well  
 Is known, and by as strong a spell  
 As used to be that sign of love  
 And hope—the OLIVE-BOUGH and DOVE ;  
 He knows it to his cost, good Man !  
 Who does not know the famous SWAN ?  
 Object uncouth ! and yet our boast,  
 For it was painted by the Host ;  
 His own conceit the figure planned,  
 'Twas coloured all by his own hand ;  
 And that frail Child of thirsty clay,  
 Of whom I sing this rustic lay,  
 Could tell with self-dissatisfaction  
 Quaint stories of the bird's attraction !<sup>1</sup>

Well ! that is past—and in despite  
 Of open door and shining light.  
 And now the conqueror essays  
 The long ascent of Dunmail-raise ;  
 And with his team is gentle here  
 As when he clomb from Rydal Mere ;  
 His whip they do not dread—his voice  
 They only hear it to rejoice.  
 To stand or go is at *their* pleasure ;  
 Their efforts and their time they measure  
 By generous pride within the breast ;  
 And, while they strain, and while they rest,  
 He thus pursues his thoughts at leisure.

Now am I fairly safe to-night—  
 And with proud cause my heart is light :  
 I trespassed lately worse than ever—  
 But Heaven has blest a good endeavour ;  
 And, to my soul's content, I find  
 The evil One is left behind.  
 Yes, let my master fume and fret,  
 Here am I—with my horses yet !  
 My jolly team, he finds that ye  
 Will work for nobody but me !  
 Full proof of this the Country gained ;  
 It knows how ye were vexed and strained,  
 And forced unworthy stripes to bear,  
 When trusted to another's care.  
 Here was it—on this rugged slope,  
 Which now ye climb with heart and hope,

<sup>1</sup> This rude piece of self-taught art (such is the progress of refinement) has been supplanted by a professional production.

I saw you, between rage and fear,  
Plunge, and fling back a spiteful ear,  
And ever more and more confused,  
As ye were more and more abused :  
As chance would have it, passing by  
I saw you in that jeopardy :  
A word from me was like a charm ;  
Ye pulled together with one mind ;  
And your huge burthen, safe from harm,  
Moved like a vessel in the wind !  
—Yes, without me, up hills so high  
'Tis vain to strive for mastery.  
Then grieve not, jolly team ! though tough  
The road we travel, steep, and rough ;  
Though Rydal-heights and Dunmail-raise,  
And all their fellow banks and braes,  
Full often make you stretch and strain,  
And halt for breath and halt again,  
Yet to their sturdiness 'tis owing  
That side by side we still are going !

While Benjamin in earnest mood  
His meditations thus pursued,  
A storm, which had been smothered long,  
Was growing inwardly more strong ;  
And, in its struggles to get free,  
Was busily employed as he.  
The thunder had begun to growl—  
He heard not, too intent of soul ;  
The air was now without a breath—  
He marked not that 'twas still as death.  
But soon large rain-drops on his head  
Fell with the weight of drops of lead ;—  
He starts—and takes, at the admonition,  
A sage survey of his condition.  
The road is black before his eyes,  
Glimmering faintly where it lies ;  
Black is the sky—and every hill,  
Up to the sky, is blacker still—  
Sky, hill, and dale, one dismal room,  
Hung round and overhung with gloom ;  
Save that above a single height  
Is to be seen a lurid light,  
Above Helm-crag<sup>1</sup>—a streak half dead,  
A burning of portentous red ;  
And near that lurid light, full well  
The ASTROLOGER, sage Sidrophel,  
Where at his desk and book he sits,  
Puzzling aloft his curious wits ;  
He whose domain is held in common  
With no one but the ANCIENT WOMAN,

<sup>1</sup> A mountain of Grasmere, the broken summit of which presents two figures, full as distinctly shaped as that of the famous Cobbler near Arroghuar in Scotland.

Cowering beside her rifted cell,  
As if intent on magic spell ;—  
Dread pair, that, spite of wind and weather,  
Still sit upon Helm-crag together !

The ASTROLOGER was not unseen  
By solitary Benjamin ;  
But total darkness came anon,  
And he and everything was gone :  
And suddenly a ruffling breeze,  
(That would have rocked the sounding trees  
Had aught of sylvan growth been there)  
Swept through the Hollow long and bare :  
The rain rushed down—the road was  
battered,

As with the force of billows shattered ;  
The horses are dismayed, nor know  
Whether they should stand or go ;  
And Benjamin is groping near them  
Sees nothing, and can scarcely hear them.  
He is astounded,—wonder not,—  
With such a charge in such a spot ;  
Astounded in the mountain gap  
With thunder-peals, clap after clap,  
Close-treading on the silent flashes—  
And somewhere, as he thinks, by crashes  
Among the rocks ; with weight of rain,  
And sullen motions long and slow,  
That to a dreary distance go—  
Till, breaking in upon the dying strain,  
A rending o'er his head begins the fray again.

Meanwhile, uncertain what to do,  
And oftentimes compelled to halt,  
The horses cautiously pursue  
Their way, without mishap or fault ;  
And now have reached that pile of stones,  
Heaped over brave King Dunmail's bones ;  
His who had once supreme command,  
Last king of rocky Cumberland ;  
His bones, and those of all his Power  
Slain here in a disastrous hour !

When, passing through this narrow strait,  
Stony, and dark, and desolate,  
Benjamin can faintly hear  
A voice that comes from some one near,  
A female voice :—"Whoe'er you be,  
Stop," it exclaimed, "and pity me !"  
And, less in pity than in wonder,  
Amid the darkness and the thunder,  
The Waggoner, with prompt command,  
Summons his horses to a stand.

While, with increasing agitation,  
The Woman urged her supplication,  
In rueful words, with sobs between—  
The voice of tears that fell unseen ;



There came a flash—a startling glare,  
And all Seat-Sandal was laid bare !  
'Tis not a time for nice suggestion,  
And Benjamin, without a question,  
Taking her for some way-worn rover,  
Said, "Mount, and get you under cover !"

Another voice, in tone as hoarse  
As a swollen brook with rugged course,  
Cried out, "Good brother, why so fast ?  
I've had a glimpse of you—*avast* !  
Or, since it suits you to be civil,  
Take her at once—for good and evil !"

"It is my Husband," softly said  
The Woman, as if half afraid :  
By this time she was snug within,  
Through help of honest Benjamin ;  
She and her Babe, which to her breast  
With thankfulness the Mother pressed ;  
And now the same strong voice more near  
Said cordially, "My Friend, what cheer ?  
Rough doings these ! as God's my judge,  
The sky owes somebody a grudge !  
We've had in half an hour or less  
A twelvemonth's terror and distress !"

Then Benjamin entreats the Man  
Would mount, too, quickly as he can :  
The Sailor—Sailor now no more,  
But such he had been heretofore—  
To courteous Benjamin replied,  
"Go you your way, and mind not me ;  
For I must have, whate'er betide,  
My Ass and fifty things beside,—  
Go, and I'll follow speedily !"

The Waggon moves—and with its load  
Descends along the sloping road ;  
And the rough Sailor instantly  
Turns to a little tent hard by :  
For when, at closing-in of day,  
The family had come that way,  
Green pasture and the soft warm air  
Tempted them to settle there.—  
Green is the grass for beast to graze,  
Around the stones of Dunmail-raise !

The Sailor gathers up his bed,  
Takes down the canvas overhead ;  
And, after farewell to the place,  
A parting word—though not of grace,  
Pursues, with Ass and all his store,  
The way the Waggon went before.

## CANTO SECOND

If Wytheburn's modest House of prayer,  
As lowly as the lowliest dwelling,

Had, with its belfry's humble stock,  
A little pair that hang in air,  
Been mistress also of a clock,  
(And one, too, not in crazy plight)  
Twelve strokes that clock would have been  
telling

Under the brow of old Helvellyn—  
Its bead-roll of midnight,  
Then, when the Hero of my tale  
Was passing by, and, down the vale  
(The vale now silent, hushed I ween  
As if a storm had never been)  
Proceeding with a mind at ease ;  
While the old Familiar of the seas,  
Intent to use his utmost haste,  
Gained ground upon the Waggon fast,  
And gives another lusty cheer ;  
For spite of rumbling of the wheels,  
A welcome greeting he can hear ;—  
It is a fiddle in its glee  
Dinning from the CHERRY TREE !

Thence the sound—the light is there—  
As Benjamin is now aware,  
Who, to his inward thoughts confined,  
Had almost reached the festive door,  
When, startled by the Sailor's roar,  
He hears a sound and sees a light,  
And in a moment calls to mind  
That 'tis the village MERRY-NIGHT !<sup>1</sup>

Although before in no dejection,  
At this insidious recollection  
His heart with sudden joy is filled,—  
His ears are by the music thrilled,  
His eyes take pleasure in the road  
Glittering before him bright and broad ;  
And Benjamin is wet and cold,  
And there are reasons manifold  
That make the good, tow'rds which he's  
yearning,

Look fairly like a lawful earning.

Nor has thought time to come and go,  
To vibrate between yes and no ;  
For, cries the Sailor, "Glorious chance  
That blew us hither !—let him dance,  
Who can or will !—my honest soul,  
Our treat shall be a friendly bowl !"  
He draws him to the door—"Come in,  
Come, come," cries he to Benjamin !  
And Benjamin—ah, woe is me !  
Gave the word—the horses heard  
And halted, though reluctantly.

<sup>1</sup> A term well known in the North of England, and applied to rural Festivals where young persons meet in the evening for the purpose of dancing.

"Blithe souls and lightsome hearts have  
 we,  
 Feasting at the CHERRY TREE !"  
 This was the outside proclamation,  
 This was the inside salutation ;  
 What bustling—jostling—high and low !  
 A universal overflow !  
 What tankards foaming from the tap !  
 What store of cakes in every lap !  
 What thumping—stumping—overhead !  
 The thunder had not been more busy :  
 With such a stir you would have said,  
 This little place may well be dizzy !  
 'Tis who can dance with greatest vigour—  
 'Tis what can be most prompt and eager ;  
 As if it heard the fiddle's call,  
 The pewter clatters on the wall ;  
 The very bacon shows its feeling,  
 Swinging from the smoky ceiling !  
 A steaming bowl, a blazing fire,  
 What greater good can heart desire ?  
 'Twere worth a wise man's while to try  
 The utmost anger of the sky :  
 To *seek* for thoughts of a gloomy cast,  
 If such the bright amends at last.  
 Now should you say I judge amiss,  
 The CHERRY TREE shows proof of this ;  
 For soon of all the happy there,  
 Our Travellers are the happiest pair ;  
 All care with Benjamin is gone—  
 A Caesar past the Rubicon !  
 He thinks not of his long, long strife ;—  
 The Sailor, Man by nature gay,  
 Hath no resolves to throw away ;  
 And he hath now forgot his Wife,  
 Hath quite forgotten her—or may be  
 Thinks her the luckiest soul on earth,  
 Within that warm and peaceful berth,  
 Under cover,  
 Terror over,  
 Sleeping by her sleeping Baby.  
 With bowl that sped from hand to hand,  
 The gladdest of the gladsome band,  
 Amid their own delight and fun,  
 They hear—when every dance is done,  
 When every whirling bout is o'er—  
 The fiddle's *squeak*<sup>1</sup>—that call to bliss,  
 Ever followed by a kiss ;  
 They envy not the happy lot,  
 But enjoy their own the more !  
 While thus our jocund Travellers fare,  
 1 At the close of each strathspey, or jig, a particular note from the fiddle summons the Rustic to the agreeable duty of saluting his partner.

Up springs the Sailor from his chair—  
 Limp (for I might have told before  
 That he was lame) across the floor—  
 Is gone—returns—and with a prize ;  
 With what ?—a Ship of lusty size ;  
 A gallant stately Man-of-war,  
 Fixed on a smoothly-sliding car.  
 Surprise to all, but most surprise  
 To Benjamin, who rubs his eyes,  
 Not knowing that he had befriended  
 A Man so gloriously attended !  
 "This," cries the Sailor, "a Third-rate  
 is—  
 Stand back, and you shall see her gratis !  
 This was the Flag-ship at the Nile,  
 The Vanguard—you may smirk and smile,  
 But, pretty Maid, if you look near,  
 You'll find you've much in little here !  
 A nobler ship did never swim,  
 And you shall see her in full trim :  
 I'll set, my friends, to do you honour,  
 Set every inch of sail upon her."  
 So said, so done ; and masts, sails, yards,  
 He names them all ; and interlards  
 His speech with uncouth terms of art,  
 Accomplished in the showman's part ;  
 And then, as from a sudden check,  
 Cries out—" 'Tis there, the quarter-deck  
 On which brave Admiral Nelson stood—  
 A sight that would have roused your blood !  
 One eye he had, which, bright as ten,  
 Burned like a fire among his men ;  
 Let this be land, and that be sea,  
 Here lay the French—and *thus* came we !"  
 Hushed was by this the fiddle's sound,  
 The dancers all were gathered round,  
 And, such the stillness of the house,  
 You might have heard a nibbling mouse ;  
 While, borrowing helps where'er he may,  
 The Sailor through the story runs  
 Of ships to ships and guns to guns ;  
 And does his utmost to display  
 The dismal conflict, and the might  
 And terror of that marvellous night !  
 "A bowl, a bowl of double measure,"  
 Cries Benjamin, "a draught of length,  
 To Nelson, England's pride and treasure,  
 Her bulwark and her tower of strength !"  
 When Benjamin had seized the bowl,  
 The mastiff, from beneath the waggon,  
 Where he lay, watchful as a dragon,  
 Rattled his chain ;—'twas all in vain,  
 For Benjamin, triumphant soul !  
 He heard the monitory growl ;

Heard—and in opposition quaffed  
 A deep, determined, desperate draught !  
 Nor did the battered Tar forget,  
 Or flinch from what he deemed his debt :  
 Then, like a hero crowned with laurel,  
 Back to her place the ship he led ;  
 Wheeled her back in full apparel ;  
 And so, flag flying at mast head,  
 Re-yoked her to the Ass:—anon,  
 Cries Benjamin, " We must be gone.  
 ' Thus, after two hours' hearty stay,  
 Again behold them on their way !

## CANTO THIRD

RIGHT gladly had the horses stirred,  
 When they the wished-for greeting heard,  
 The whip's loud notice from the door,  
 That they were free to move once more.  
 You think, those doings must have bred  
 In them disheartening doubts and dread ;  
 No, not a horse of all the eight,  
 Although it be a moonless night,  
 Fears either for himself or freight ;  
 For this they know (and let it hide,  
 In part, the offences of their guide)  
 That Benjamin, with clouded brains,  
 Is worth the best with all their pains ;  
 And, if they had a prayer to make,  
 The prayer would be that they may take  
 With him whatever comes in course,  
 The better fortune or the worse ;  
 That no one else may have business near them,  
 And, drunk or sober, he may steer them.  
 So, forth in dauntless mood they fare,  
 And with them goes the guardian pair.

Now, heroes, for the true commotion,  
 The triumph of your late devotion  
 Can aught on earth impede delight,  
 Still mounting to a higher height ;  
 And higher still—a greedy flight !  
 Can any low-born care pursue her,  
 Can any mortal clog come to her ?<sup>1</sup>  
 No notion have they—not a thought,  
 That is from joyless regions brought !  
 And, while they coast the silent lake,  
 Their inspiration I partake ;  
 Share their empyreal spirits—yea,  
 With their enraptured vision, see—  
 O fancy—what a jubilee !  
 What shifting pictures—clad in gleams  
 Of colour bright as feverish dreams !  
 Earth, spangled sky, and lake serene,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Involved and restless all—a scene  
 Pregnant with mutual exaltation,  
 Rich change, and multiplied creation !  
 This sight to me the Muse imparts ;—  
 And then, what kindness in their hearts !  
 What tears of rapture, what vow-making,  
 Profound entreaties, and hand-shaking !  
 What solemn, vacant, interlacing,  
 As if they'd fall asleep embracing !  
 Then, in the turbulence of glee,  
 And in the excess of amity,  
 Says Benjamin, " That Ass of thine,  
 He spoils thy sport, and hinders mine :  
 If he were tethered to the waggon,  
 He'd drag as well what he is dragging,  
 And we, as brother should with brother,  
 Might trudge it alongside each other ! "  
 Forthwith, obedient to command,  
 The horses made a quiet stand ;  
 And to the waggon's skirts was tied  
 The Creature, by the Mastiff's side,  
 The Mastiff wondering, and perplexed  
 With dread of what will happen next ;  
 And thinking it but sorry cheer,  
 To have such company so near !

This new arrangement made, the Wain  
 Through the still night proceeds again ;  
 No Moon hath risen her light to lend ;  
 But indistinctly may be kenne'd  
 The VANGUARD, following close behind,  
 Sails spread, as if to catch the wind !

" Thy wife and child are snug and warm,  
 Thy ship will travel without harm ;  
 I like," said Benjamin, " her shape and  
 stature :

And this of mine—this bulky creature  
 Of which I have the steering—this,  
 Seen fairly, is not much amiss !  
 We want your streamers, friend, you know ;  
 But, altogether as we go,  
 We make a kind of handsome show !  
 Among these hills, from first to last,  
 We've weathered many a furious blast ;  
 Hard passage forcing on, with head  
 Against the storm, and canvas spread.  
 I hate a boaster ; but to thee  
 Will say't, who know'st both land and  
 sea,

The unluckiest hulk that stems the brine  
 Is hardly worse beset than mine,  
 When cross-winds on her quarter beat ;  
 And, fairly lifted from my feet,  
 I stagger onward—heaven knows how ;  
 But not so pleasantly as now :

Poor pilot I, by snows confounded,  
And many a foundrous pit surrounded !  
Yet here we are, by night and day  
Grinding through rough and smooth our  
way ;

Through foul and fair our task fulfilling ;  
And long shall be so yet—God willing !”

“Ay,” said the Tar, “through fair and  
foul—

But save us from yon screeching owl !”  
That instant was begun a fray  
Which called their thoughts another way :  
The mastiff, ill-conditioned carl !  
What must he do but growl and snarl,  
Still more and more dissatisfied  
With the meek comrade at his side !  
Till, not incensed though put to proof,  
The Ass, uplifting a hind hoof,  
Salutes the Mastiff on the head ;  
And so were better manners bred,  
And all was calmed and quieted.

“Yon screech-owl,” says the Sailor,  
turning

Back to his former cause of mourning,  
“Yon owl !—pray God that all be well !  
’Tis worse than any funeral bell ;  
As sure as I’ve the gift of sight,  
We shall be meeting ghosts to-night !”  
—Said Benjamin, “This whip shall lay  
A thousand, if they cross our way.  
I know that Wanton’s noisy station,  
I know him and his occupation ;  
The jolly bird hath learned his cheer  
Upon the banks of Windermere ;  
Where a tribe of them make merry,  
Mocking the Man that keeps the ferry ;  
Hallooing from an open throat,  
Like travellers shouting for a boat.  
—The tricks he learned at Windermere  
This vagrant owl is playing here—  
That is the worst of his employment :  
He’s at the top of his enjoyment !”

This explanation stilled the alarm,  
Cured the foreboder like a charm ;  
This, and the manner, and the voice,  
Summoned the Sailor to rejoice ;  
His heart is up—he fears no evil  
From life or death, from man or devil ;  
He wheels—and, making many stops,  
Brandished his crutch against the mountain  
tops ;

And, while he talked of blows and scars,  
Benjamin, among the stars,  
Beheld a dancing—and a glancing ;

Such retreating and advancing  
As, I ween, was never seen  
In bloodiest battle since the days of Mars !

## CANTO FOURTH

THUS they, with freaks of proud delight,  
Beguile the remnant of the night ;  
And many a snatch of jovial song  
Regales them as they wind along ;  
While to the music, from on high,  
The echoes make a glad reply.—  
But the sage Muse the revel heeds  
No farther than her story needs ;  
Nor will she servilely attend  
The loitering journey to its end.  
—Blithe spirits of her own impel  
The Muse, who scents the morning air,  
To take of this transported pair  
A brief and unproved farewell ;  
To quit the slow-paced waggon’s side,  
And wander down yon hawthorn dell,  
With murmuring Greta for her guide.  
—There doth she ken the awful form  
Of Raven-crag—black as a storm—  
Glimmering through the twilight pale ;  
And Ghimmer-crag,<sup>1</sup> his tall twin brother,  
Each peering forth to meet the other :—  
And, while she roves through St. John’s  
Vale,

Along the smooth unpathwayed plain,  
By sheep-track or through cottage lane,  
Where no disturbance comes to intrude  
Upon the pensive solitude,  
Her unsuspecting eye, perchance,  
With the rude shepherd’s favoured glance,  
Beholds the faeries in array,  
Whose party-coloured garments gay  
The silent company betray :  
Red, green, and blue ; a moment’s sight !  
For Skiddaw-top with rosy light  
Is touched—and all the band take flight.  
—Fly also, Muse ! and from the dell  
Mount to the ridge of Nathdale Fell ;  
Thence, look thou forth o’er wood and  
lawn

Hoar with the frost-like dews of dawn ;  
Across yon meadowy bottom look,  
Where close fogs hide their parent brook ;  
And see, beyond that hamlet small,  
The ruined towers of Threlkeld-hall,  
Lurking in a double shade,  
By trees and lingering twilight made !

<sup>1</sup> The crag of the ewe lamb.

There, at Blencathara's rugged feet,  
 Sir Lancelot gave a safe retreat  
 To noble Clifford; from annoy  
 Concealed the persecuted boy,  
 Well pleased in rustic garb to feed  
 His flock, and pipe on shepherd's reed  
 Among this multitude of hills,  
 Craggs, woodlands, waterfalls, and rills;  
 Which soon the morning shall enfold,  
 From east to west, in ample vest  
 Of massy gloom and radiance bold.

The mists, that o'er the streamlet's bed  
 Hung low, begin to rise and spread;  
 Even while I speak, their skirts of grey  
 Are smitten by a silver ray;  
 And lo!—up Castrigg's naked steep  
 (Where, smoothly urged, the vapours sweep  
 Along—and scatter and divide,  
 Like fleecy clouds self-multiplied)  
 The stately waggon is ascending,  
 With faithful Benjamin attending,  
 Apparent now beside his team—  
 Now lost amid a glittering steam:  
 And with him goes his Sailor-friend,  
 By this time near their journey's end;  
 And, after their high-minded riot,  
 Sickening into thoughtful quiet;  
 As if the morning's pleasant hour  
 Had for their joys a killing power.  
 And, sooth, for Benjamin a vein  
 Is opened of still deeper pain  
 As if his heart by notes were stung  
 From out the lowly hedge-rows flung;  
 As if the Warbler lost in light  
 Reproved his soarings of the night,  
 In strains of rapture pure and holy  
 Upbraided his distempered folly.

Drooping is he, his step is dull;  
 But the horses stretch and pull;  
 With increasing vigour climb,  
 Eager to repair lost time;  
 Whether, by their own desert,  
 Knowing what cause there is for shame,  
 They are labouring to avert  
 As much as may be of the blame,  
 Which, they foresee, must soon alight  
 Upon *his* head, whom, in despite  
 Of all his failings, they love best;  
 Whether for him they are distressed,  
 Or, by length of fasting roused,  
 Are impatient to be housed:  
 Up against the hill they strain  
 Tugging at the iron chain,  
 Tugging all with might and main,

Last and foremost, every horse  
 To the utmost of his force!  
 And the smoke and respiration,  
 Rising like an exhalation,  
 Blend with the mist—a moving shroud  
 To form, an undissolving cloud;  
 Which, with slant ray, the merry sun  
 Takes delight to play upon.  
 Never golden-haired Apollo,  
 Pleased some favourite chief to follow  
 Through accidents of peace or war,  
 In a perilous moment threw  
 Around the object of his care  
 Veil of such celestial hue;  
 Interposed so bright a screen—  
 Him and his enemies between!

Alas! what boots it?—who can hide,  
 When the malicious Fates are bent  
 On working out an ill intent?  
 Can destiny be turned aside?  
 No—sad progress of my story!  
 Benjamin, this outward glory  
 Cannot shield thee from thy Master,  
 Who from Keswick has pricked forth,  
 Sour and surly as the north;  
 And, in fear of some disaster,  
 Comes to give what help he may,  
 And to hear what thou canst say;  
 If, as needs he must forebode,  
 Thou hast been loitering on the road!  
 His fears, his doubts, may now take flight—  
 The wished-for object is in sight;  
 Yet, trust the Muse, it rather hath  
 Stirred him up to livelier wrath;  
 Which he stifles, moody man!  
 With all the patience that he can;  
 To the end that, at your meeting,  
 He may give thee decent greeting.

There he is—resolved to stop,  
 Till the waggon gains the top;  
 But stop he cannot—must advance:  
 Him Benjamin, with lucky glance,  
 Espies—and instantly is ready,  
 Self-collected, poised, and steady:  
 And, to be the better seen,  
 Issues from his radiant shroud,  
 From his close-attending cloud,  
 With careless air and open mien.  
 Erect his port, and firm his going;  
 So struts yon cock that now is crowing;  
 And the morning light in grace  
 Strikes upon his lifted face,  
 Hurrying the pallid hue away  
 That might his trespasses betray.

But what can all avail to clear him,  
 Or what need of explanation,  
 Parley or interrogation?  
 For the Master sees, alas!  
 That unhappy Figure near him,  
 Limping o'er the dewy grass,  
 Where the road it fringes, sweet,  
 Soft and cool to way-worn feet;  
 And, O indignity! an Ass,  
 By his noble Mastiff's side,  
 Tethered to the waggon's tail:  
 And the ship, in all her pride,  
 Following after in full sail!  
 Not to speak of babe and mother;  
 Who, contented with each other,  
 And snug as birds in leafy arbour,  
 Find, within, a blessed harbour!

With eager eyes the Master pries;  
 Looks in and out, and through and through;  
 Says nothing—till at last he spies  
 A wound upon the Mastiff's head,  
 A wound, where plainly might be read  
 What feats an Ass's hoof can do!  
 But drop the rest:—this aggravation,  
 This complicated provocation,  
 A hoard of grievances unsealed;  
 All past forgiveness it repealed;  
 And thus, and through distempered blood  
 On both sides, Benjamin the good,  
 The patient, and the tender-hearted,  
 Was from his team and waggon parted;  
 When duty of that day was o'er,  
 Laid down his whip—and served no more.—  
 Nor could the waggon long survive,  
 Which Benjamin had ceased to drive:  
 It lingered on;—guide after guide  
 Ambitiously the office tried;  
 But each unmanageable hill  
 Called for *his* patience and *his* skill;—  
 And sure it is, that through this night,  
 And what the morning brought to light,  
 Two losses had we to sustain,  
 We lost both WAGGONER and WAIN!

Accept, O Friend, for praise or blame,  
 The gift of this adventurous song;  
 A record which I dared to frame,  
 Though timid scruples checked me long;  
 They checked me—and I left the theme  
 Untouched—in spite of many a gleam  
 Of fancy which thereon was shed,  
 Like pleasant sunbeams shifting still  
 Upon the side of a distant hill:

But Nature might FIRST  
 For what I have and  
 I sing of these;—it makes HOOD AND  
 Nor is it I who play the part.  
 But a shy spirit in my heart,  
 That comes and goes—will sometimes,  
 From hiding-places ten years deep;  
 Or haunts me with familiar face,  
 Returning, like a ghost unladen,  
 Until the debt I owe be paid.  
 Forgive me, then; for I had been  
 On friendly terms with this Machine:  
 In him, while he was wont to trace  
 Our roads, through many a long year's space,  
 A living almanack had we;  
 We had a speaking diary,  
 That in this uneventful place  
 Gave to the days a mark and name  
 By which we knew them when they came.  
 —Yes, I, and all about me here,  
 Through all the changes of the year,  
 Had seen him through the mountains go,  
 In pomp of mist or pomp of snow,  
 Majestically huge and slow:  
 Or, with a milder grace adorning  
 The landscape of a summer's morning;  
 While Grasmere smoothed her liquid plain  
 The moving image to detain;  
 And mighty Fairfield, with a chime  
 Of echoes, to his march kept time;  
 When little other business stirred,  
 And little other sound was heard;  
 In that delicious hour of balm,  
 Stillness, solitude, and calm,  
 While yet the valley is arrayed,  
 On this side with a sober shade;  
 On that is prodigally bright—  
 Crag, lawn, and wood—with rosy light.  
 —But most of all, thou Lordly Wain!  
 I wish to have thee here again,  
 When windows flap and chimney roars,  
 And all is dismal out of doors;  
 And, sitting by my fire, I see  
 Eight sorry carts, no less a train;  
 Unworthy successors of thee,  
 Come straggling through the wind and rain!  
 And oft, as they pass slowly on,  
 Beneath my windows, one by one,  
 See, perched upon the naked height  
 The summit of a cumbrous freight,  
 A single traveller—and there  
 Another; then perhaps a pair—  
 The lame, the sickly, and the old;  
 Men, women, heartless with the cold;

And babes in wet and starveling plight  
Which once, be weather as it might,  
Had still a nest within a nest,  
Thy shelter—and their mother's breast !  
Then most of all, then far the most,  
Do I regret what we have lost ;  
Am grieved for that unhappy sin  
Which robbed us of good Benjamin ;  
And of his stately Charge, which none  
Could keep alive when He was gone !  
1805.

### FRENCH REVOLUTION

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS  
COMMENCEMENT.<sup>1</sup> REPRINTED FROM  
"THE FRIEND"<sup>2</sup>

An extract from the long poem on my own  
poetical education. It was first published by  
Coleridge in his "Friend," which is the reason  
of its having had a place in every edition of my  
poems since.

OH ! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !  
For mighty were the auxiliars which then  
stood  
Upon our side, we who were strong in love !  
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very heaven !—Oh !  
times,

In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways  
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
The attraction of a country in romance !  
When Reason seemed the most to assert  
her rights,

When most intent on making of herself  
A prime Enchantress—to assist the work,  
Which then was going forward in her name !  
Not favoured spots alone, but the whole  
earth,

The beauty wore of promise, that which sets  
(As at some moment might not be unfelt  
Among the bowers of paradise itself)  
The budding rose above the rose full blown.  
What temper at the prospect did not wake  
To happiness unthought of ? The inert  
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away !  
They who had fed their childhood upon  
dreams,

<sup>1</sup> This and the Extract, p. 112, and the first  
Piece of this Class, are from the [then] unpub-  
lished Poem of which some account is given in  
the Preface to the EXCURSION.

<sup>2</sup> Prelude, book xi. p. 315.

The playfellows of fancy, who had made  
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and  
strength  
Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had  
stirred  
Among the grandest objects of the sense,  
And dealt with whatsoever they found there  
As if they had within some lurking right  
To wield it ;—they, too, who, of gentle  
mood,  
Had watched all gentle motions, and to  
these  
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers  
more mild,  
And in the region of their peaceful selves ;—  
Now was it that both found, the meek and  
lofty  
Did both find, helpers to their heart's desire,  
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could  
wish ;  
Were called upon to exercise their skill,  
Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,  
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows  
where !  
But in the very world, which is the world  
Of all of us,—the place where in the end  
We find our happiness, or not at all !  
1805.

### THE PRELUDE

OR, GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND ;  
AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL POEM

#### ADVERTISEMENT

The following Poem was commenced in the  
beginning of the year 1799, and completed in the  
summer of 1805.

The design and occasion of the work are  
described by the Author in his Preface to the  
EXCURSION, first published in 1814, where he  
thus speaks :—

"Several years ago, when the Author retired  
to his native mountains with the hope of being  
enabled to construct a literary work that might  
live, it was a reasonable thing that he should  
take a review of his own mind, and examine how  
far Nature and Education had qualified him for  
such an employment.

"As subsidiary to this preparation, he under-  
took to record, in verse, the origin and progress  
of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted  
with them.

"That work, addressed to a dear friend, most

distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it, was a determination to compose a philosophical Poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society, and to be entitled the 'Recluse'; as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.

"The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the Ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor pieces, which have been long before the public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive reader to have such connection with the main work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices."

Such was the Author's language in the year 1814.

It will thence be seen, that the present Poem was intended to be introductory to the RECLUSE, and that the RECLUSE, if completed, would have consisted of Three Parts. Of these, the Second Part alone, viz. the EXCURSION, was finished, and given to the world by the Author.

The First Book of the First Part of the RECLUSE still remains in manuscript;<sup>1</sup> but the Third Part was only planned. The materials of which it would have been formed have, however, been incorporated, for the most part, in the Author's other Publications, written subsequently to the EXCURSION.

The Friend, to whom the present Poem is addressed, was the late SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, who was resident in Malta, for the restoration of his health, when the greater part of it was composed.

Mr. Coleridge read a considerable portion of the Poem while he was abroad; and his feelings, on hearing it recited by the Author (after his return to his own country), are recorded in his Verses, addressed to Mr. Wordsworth, which will be found in the *Sibylline Leaves*, p. 197, ed. 1817, or *Poetical Works*, by S. T. Coleridge, vol. i. p. 206.

RYDAL MOUNT

July 13th, 1850.

## BOOK FIRST

### INTRODUCTION—CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL-TIME

OH there is blessing in this gentle breeze,  
A visitant that while it fans my cheek  
Doth seem half-conscious of the joy it  
brings

From the green fields, and from yon azure  
sky.

Whate'er its mission, the soft breeze can  
come

To none more grateful than to me; escaped  
From the vast city, where I long had pined  
A discontented sojourner: now free,  
Free as a bird to settle where I will.

What dwelling shall receive me? in what  
vale

Shall be my harbour? underneath what  
grove

Shall I take up my home? and what clear  
stream

Shall with its murmur lull me into rest?  
The earth is all before me. With a heart  
Joyous, nor scared at its own liberty,  
I look about; and should the chosen guide  
Be nothing better than a wandering cloud,  
I cannot miss my way. I breathe again!  
Trances of thought and mountings of the  
mind

Come fast upon me: it is shaken off,  
That burthen of my own unnatural self,  
The heavy weight of many a weary day  
Not mine, and such as were not made for  
me.

Long months of peace (if such bold word  
accord

With any promises of human life),  
Long months of ease and undisturbed  
delight

Are mine in prospect; whither shall I turn,  
By road or pathway, or through trackless  
field,

Up hill or down, or shall some floating  
thing

Upon the river point me out my course?

Dear Liberty! Yet what would it avail  
But for a gift that consecrates the joy?  
For I, methought, while the sweet breath  
of heaven

Was blowing on my body, felt within  
A correspondent breeze, that gently moved

<sup>1</sup> Now printed, see p. 334.



With quickening virtue, but is now become  
A tempest, a redundant energy,  
Vexing its own creation. Thanks to both,  
And their congenial powers, that, while  
they join

In breaking up a long-continued frost,  
Bring with them vernal promises, the hope  
Of active days urged on by flying hours,—  
Days of sweet leisure, taxed with patient  
thought

Abstruse, nor wanting punctual service  
high,

Matins and vespers of harmonious verse!

Thus far, O Friend! did I, not used to  
make

A present joy the matter of a song,  
Pour forth that day my soul in measured  
strains

That would not be forgotten, and are here  
Recorded: to the open fields I told  
A prophecy: poetic numbers came  
Spontaneously to clothe in priestly robe  
A renovated spirit singled out,  
Such hope was mine, for holy services.

My own voice cheered me, and, far more,  
the mind's

Internal echo of the imperfect sound;  
To both I listened, drawing from them both  
A cheerful confidence in things to come.

Content and not unwilling now to give  
A respite to this passion, I paced on  
With brisk and eager steps; and came, at  
length,

To a green shady place, where down I sat  
Beneath a tree, slackening my thoughts by  
choice

And settling into gentler happiness.

'Twas autumn, and a clear and placid day,  
With warmth, as much as needed, from a  
sun

Two hours declined towards the west; a  
day

With silver clouds, and sunshine on the  
grass,

And in the sheltered and the sheltering  
grove

A perfect stillness. Many were the  
thoughts

Encouraged and dismissed, till choice was  
made

Of a known Vale, whither my feet should  
turn,

Nor rest till they had reached the very door  
Of the one cottage which methought I saw.  
No picture of mere memory ever looked  
So fair; and while upon the fancied scene  
I gazed with growing love, a higher power  
Than Fancy gave assurance of some work  
Of glory there forthwith to be begun,  
Perhaps too there performed. Thus long  
I mused,

Nor e'er lost sight of what I mused upon,  
Save when, amid the stately grove of oaks,  
Now here, now there, an acorn, from its  
cup

Dislodged, through sere leaves rustled, or  
at once

To the bare earth dropped with a startling  
sound.

From that soft couch I rose not, till the  
sun

Had almost touched the horizon; casting  
then

A backward glance upon the curling cloud  
Of city smoke, by distance ruralised;  
Keen as a Truant or a Fugitive,  
But as a Pilgrim resolute, I took,

Even with the chance equipment of that  
hour,

The road that pointed toward the chosen  
Vale.

It was a splendid evening, and my soul  
Once more made trial of her strength, nor  
lacked

Æolian visitations; but the harp  
Was soon defrauded, and the banded host  
Of harmony dispersed in straggling sounds,  
And lastly utter silence! "Be it so;

Why think of anything but present good?"  
So, like a home-bound labourer, I pursued  
My way beneath the mellowing sun, that  
shed

Mild influence; nor left in me one wish  
Again to bend the Sabbath of that time  
To a servile yoke. What need of many  
words?

A pleasant loitering journey, through three  
days

Continued, brought me to my hermitage.  
I spare to tell of what ensued, the life  
In common things—the endless store of  
things,

Rare, or at least so seeming, every day  
Found all about me in one neighbourhood—  
The self-congratulation, and, from morn  
To night, unbroken cheerfulness serene.

But speedily an earnest longing rose  
To brace myself to some determined aim,  
Reading or thinking; either to lay up  
New stores, or rescue from decay the old  
By timely interference: and therewith  
Came hopes still higher, that with outward  
life

I might endure some airy phantasies  
That had been floating loose about for  
years,

And to such beings temperately deal forth  
The many feelings that oppressed my heart.  
That hope hath been discouraged; welcome  
light

Dawns from the east, but dawns to dis-  
appear

And mock me with a sky that ripens not  
Into a steady morning: if my mind,  
Remembering the bold promise of the past,  
Would gladly grapple with some noble  
theme,

Vain is her wish; where'er she turns she  
finds

Impediments from day to day renewed.

And now it would content me to yield up  
Those lofty hopes awhile, for present gifts  
Of humbler industry. But, oh, dear Friend!  
The Poet, gentle creature as he is,  
Hath, like the Lover, his unruly times;  
His fits when he is neither sick nor well,  
Though no distress be near him but his own  
Unmanageable thoughts; his mind, best  
pleased

While she as duteous as the mother dove  
Sits brooding, lives not always to that end,  
But like the innocent bird, hath goadings  
on

That drive her as in trouble through the  
groves;

With me is now such passion, to be blamed  
No otherwise than as it lasts too long.

When, as becomes a man who would  
prepare

For such an arduous work, I through myself  
Make rigorous inquisition, the report  
Is often cheering; for I neither seem  
To lack that first great gift, the vital soul,  
Nor general Truths, which are themselves  
a sort

Of Elements and Agents, Under-powers,  
Subordinate helpers of the living mind:  
Nor am I naked of external things,

Forms, images, nor numerous other aids  
Of less regard, though won perhaps with  
toil

And needful to build up a Poet's praise.  
Time, place, and manners do I seek, and  
these

Are found in plenteous store, but nowhere  
such

As may be singled out with steady choice;  
No little band of yet remembered names  
Whom I, in perfect confidence, might  
hope

To summon back from lonesome banish-  
ment,

And make them dwellers in the hearts of  
men

Now living, or to live in future years.  
Sometimes the ambitious Power of choice,  
mistaking

Proud spring-tide swellings for a regular  
sea,

Will settle on some British theme, some old  
Romantic tale by Milton left unsung;  
More often turning to some gentle place  
Within the groves of Chivalry, I pipe

To shepherd swains, or seated harp in hand,  
Amid reposing knights by a river side  
Or fountain, listen to the grave reports  
Of dire enchantments faced and overcome  
By the strong mind, and tales of warlike  
feats,

Where spear encountered spear, and sword  
with sword

Fought, as if conscious of the blazonry  
That the shield bore, so glorious was the  
strife;

Whence inspiration for a song that winds  
Through ever-changing scenes of votive  
quest

Wrongs to redress, harmonious tribute paid  
To patient courage and unblemished truth,  
To firm devotion, zeal unquenchable,  
And Christian meekness hallowing faithful  
loves.

Sometimes, more sternly moved, I would  
relate

How vanquished Mithridates northward  
passed,

And, hidden in the cloud of years, became  
Odin, the Father of a race by whom  
Perished the Roman Empire: how the  
friends

And followers of Sertorius, out of Spain  
Flying, found shelter in the Fortunate Isles,

And left their usages, their arts and laws,  
To disappear by a slow gradual death,  
To dwindle and to perish one by one,  
Starved in those narrow bounds: but not  
the soul

Of Liberty, which fifteen hundred years  
Survived, and, when the European came  
With skill and power that might not be  
withstood,

Did, like a pestilence, maintain its hold  
And wasted down by glorious death that  
race

Of natural heroes: or I would record  
How, in tyrannic times, some high-souled  
man,

Unnamed among the chronicles of kings,  
Suffered in silence for Truth's sake: or tell,  
How that one Frenchman,<sup>1</sup> through con-  
tinued force

Of meditation on the inhuman deeds  
Of those who conquered first the Indian  
Isles,

Went single in his ministry across  
The Ocean; not to comfort the oppressed,  
But, like a thirsty wind, to roam about  
Withering the Oppressor: how Gustavus  
sought

Help at his need in Dalecarlia's mines:  
How Wallace fought for Scotland; left the  
name

Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,  
All over his dear Country; left the deeds  
Of Wallace, like a family of Ghosts,  
To people the steep rocks and river banks,  
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul  
Of independence and stern liberty.

Sometimes it suits me better to invent  
A tale from my own heart, more near akin  
To my own passions and habitual thoughts;  
Some variegated story, in the main  
Lofty, but the unsubstantial structure melts  
Before the very sun that brightens it,  
Mist into air dissolving! Then a wish,  
My last and favourite aspiration, mounts  
With yearning toward some philosophic  
song

Of Truth that cherishes our daily life;  
With meditations passionate from deep  
Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse  
Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre;  
But from this awful burthen I full soon

<sup>1</sup> Dominique de Gourgues, a French gentleman who went in 1568 to Florida to avenge the massacre of the French by the Spaniards there.

Take refuge and beguile myself with trust  
That mellow years will bring a ripier mind  
And clearer insight. Thus my days are  
past

In contradiction; with no skill to part  
Vague longing, haply bred by want of  
power,  
From paramount impulse not to be with-  
stood,

A timorous capacity, from prudence,  
From circumspection, infinite delay.  
Humility and modest awe, themselves  
Betray me, serving often for a cloak  
To a more subtle selfishness; that now  
Locks every function up in blank reserve,  
Now dupes me, trusting to an anxious eye  
That with intrusive restlessness beats off  
Simplicity and self-presented truth.

Ah! better far than this, to stray about  
Voluptuously through fields and rural walks,  
And ask no record of the hours, resigned  
To vacant musing, unproved neglect  
Of all things, and deliberate holiday.  
Far better never to have heard the name  
Of zeal and just ambition, than to live  
Baffled and plagued by a mind that every  
hour

Turns recreant to her task; takes heart  
again,

Then feels immediately some hollow thought  
Hang like an interdict upon her hopes.  
This is my lot; for either still I find  
Some imperfection in the chosen theme,  
Or see of absolute accomplishment  
Much wanting, so much wanting, in my-  
self,

That I recoil and droop, and seek repose  
In listlessness from vain perplexity,  
Unprofitably travelling toward the grave,  
Like a false steward who hath much received  
And renders nothing back.

Was it for this  
That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved  
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,  
And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,  
And from his fords and shallows, sent a  
voice

That flowed along my dreams? For this,  
didst thou,

O Derwent! winding among grassy holms  
Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,  
Make ceaseless music that composed my  
thoughts

To more than infant softness, giving me

Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind  
A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm  
That Nature breathes among the hills and  
groves.

When he had left the mountains and  
received  
On his smooth breast the shadow of those  
towers  
That yet survive, a shattered monument  
Of feudal sway, the bright blue river passed  
Along the margin of our terrace walk;  
A tempting playmate whom we dearly loved.  
Oh, many a time have I, a five years' child,  
In a small mill-race severed from his stream,  
Made one long bathing of a summer's day;  
Basked in the sun, and plunged and basked  
again  
Alternate, all a summer's day, or scoured  
The sandy fields, leaping through flowery  
groves  
Of yellow ragwort; or, when rock and hill,  
The woods, and distant Skiddaw's lofty  
height,  
Were bronzed with deepest radiance, stood  
alone  
Beneath the sky, as if I had been born  
On Indian plains, and from my mother's hut  
Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport  
A naked savage, in the thunder shower.

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up  
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear:  
Much favoured in my birth-place, and no  
less  
In that beloved Vale to which erelong  
We were transplanted;—there were we let  
loose  
For sports of wider range. Ere I had told  
Ten birth-days, when among the mountain  
slopes  
Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had  
snapped  
The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy  
With store of springes o'er my shoulder  
hung  
To range the open heights where woodcocks  
run  
Along the smooth green turf. Through  
half the night,  
Scudding away from snare to snare, I plied  
That anxious visitation;—moon and stars  
Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,  
And seemed to be a trouble to the peace

That dwelt among them. Sometimes it  
befell  
In these night wanderings, that a strong  
desire  
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird  
Which was the captive of another's toil  
Became my prey; and when the deed was  
done  
I heard among the solitary hills  
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds  
Of undistinguishable motion, steps  
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

Nor less, when spring had warmed the  
cultured Vale,  
Moved we as plunderers where the mother-  
bird  
Had in high places built her lodge; though  
mean  
Our object and inglorious, yet the end  
Was not ignoble. Oh! when I have hung  
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass  
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock  
But ill sustained, and almost (so it seemed)  
Suspended by the blast that blew amain,  
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that time  
While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,  
With what strange utterance did the loud  
dry wind  
Blow through my ear! the sky seemed not  
a sky  
Of earth—and with what motion moved the  
clouds!

Dust as we are, the immortal spirit grows  
Like harmony in music; there is a dark  
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles  
Discordant elements, makes them cling  
together;  
In one society. How strange, that all  
The terrors, pains, and early miseries,  
Regrets, vexations, lassitudes interfused  
Within my mind, should e'er have borne a  
part,  
And that a needful part, in making up  
The calm existence that is mine when I  
Am worthy of myself! Praise to the end!  
Thanks to the means which Nature deigned  
to employ;  
Whether her fearless visitings, or those  
That came with soft alarm, like hurtless  
light  
Opening the peaceful clouds; or she would  
use

Severer interventions, ministry  
More palpable, as best might suit her aim.

One summer evening (led by her) I found  
A little boat tied to a willow tree  
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.  
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping  
in

Pushed from the shore. It was an act of  
stealth

And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice  
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on ;  
Leaving behind her still, on either side,  
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,  
Until they melted all into one track  
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who  
rows,

Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point  
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view  
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,  
The horizon's utmost boundary ; far above  
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.  
She was an elfin pinnace ; lustily  
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,  
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat  
Went heaving through the water like a swan ;  
When, from behind that craggy steep till  
then

The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black  
and huge,

As if with voluntary power instinct,  
Upreared its head. I struck and struck  
again,

And growing still in stature the grim shape  
Towered up between me and the stars, and  
still,

For so it seemed, with purpose of its own  
And measured motion like a living thing,  
Strode after me. With trembling oars I  
turned,

And through the silent water stole my way  
Back to the covert of the willow tree ;  
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,—  
And through the meadows homeward went,  
in grave

And serious mood ; but after I had seen  
That spectacle, for many days, my brain  
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense  
Of unknown modes of being ; o'er my  
thoughts

There hung a darkness, call it solitude  
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes  
Remained, no pleasant images of trees,  
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields ;

But huge and mighty forms, that do not live  
Like living men, moved slowly through the  
mind  
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

<sup>1</sup> Wisdom and Spirit of the universe !  
Thou Soul that art the eternity of thought  
That givest to forms and images a breath  
And everlasting motion, not in vain  
By day or star-light thus from my first dawn  
Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me  
The passions that build up our human soul :  
Not with the mean and vulgar works of  
man,

But with high objects, with enduring  
things—

With life and nature—purifying thus  
The elements of feeling and of thought,  
And sanctifying, by such discipline,  
Both pain and fear, until we recognise  
A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.  
Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me  
With stinted kindness. In November days,  
When vapours rolling down the valley made  
A lonely scene more lonesome, among  
woods,

At noon and 'mid the calm of summer  
nights,

When, by the margin of the trembling lake,  
Beneath the gloomy hills homeward I went  
In solitude, such intercourse was mine ;  
Mine was it in the fields both day and night,  
And by the waters, all the summer long.

And in the frosty season, when the sun  
Was set, and visible for many a mile  
The cottage windows blazed through  
twilight gloom,

I heeded not their summons : happy time  
It was indeed for all of us—for me  
It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud  
The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled  
about,

Proud and exulting like an untired horse  
That cares not for his home. All shod  
with steel,

We hissed along the polished ice in games  
Confederate, imitative of the chase  
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding  
horn,  
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted  
hare.

<sup>1</sup> These lines have been printed before. See  
p. 112.

So through the darkness and the cold we  
flew,

And not a voice was idle; with the din  
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud;  
The leafless trees and every icy crag  
Tinkled like iron; while far distant hills  
Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars  
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the  
west

The orange sky of evening died away.  
Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
Into a silent bay, or sportively  
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous  
throng,

To cut across the reflex of a star  
That fled, and, flying still before me,  
gleamed

Upon the glassy plain; and oftentimes,  
When we had given our bodies to the wind,  
And all the shadowy banks on either side  
Came sweeping through the darkness,  
spinning still

The rapid line of motion, then at once  
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,  
Stopped short; yet still the solitary cliffs  
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had  
rolled

With visible motion her diurnal round!  
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,  
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and  
watched

Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

Ye Presences of Nature in the sky  
And on the earth! Ye Visions of the hills!  
And Souls of lonely places! can I think  
A vulgar hope was yours when ye employed  
Such ministry, when ye, through many a  
year

Haunting me thus among my boyish sports,  
On caves and trees, upon the woods and  
hills,

Impressed, upon all forms, the characters  
Of danger or desire; and thus did make  
The surface of the universal earth,  
With triumph and delight, with hope and  
fear,

Work like a sea?

Not uselessly employed,  
Might I pursue this theme through every  
change

Of exercise and play, to which the year  
Did summon us in his delightful round.

We were a noisy crew; the sun in heaven  
Beheld not vales more beautiful than ours;  
Nor saw a band in happiness and joy  
Richer, or worthier of the ground they  
trod.

I could record with no reluctant voice  
The woods of autumn, and their hazel  
bowers

With milk-white clusters hung; the rod  
and line,

True symbol of hope's foolishness, whose  
strong

And unproved enchantment led us on  
By rocks and pools shut out from every  
star,

All the green summer, to forlorn cascades  
Among the windings hid of mountain  
brooks.

—Unfading recollections! at this hour  
The heart is almost mine with which I felt,  
From some hill-top on sunny afternoons,  
The paper kite high among fleecy clouds  
Pull at her rein like an impetuous courser;  
Or, from the meadows sent on gusty days,  
Beheld her breast the wind, then suddenly  
Dashed headlong, and rejected by the  
storm.

Ye lowly cottages wherein we dwelt,  
A ministration of your own was yours;  
Can I forget you, being as you were  
So beautiful among the pleasant fields  
In which ye stood? or can I here forget  
The plain and seemingly countenance with  
which

Ye dealt out your plain comforts? Yet  
had ye

Delights and exultations of your own.  
Eager and never weary we pursued  
Our home-amusements by the warm peat-  
fire

At evening, when with pencil, and smooth  
slate

In square divisions parcelled out and all  
With crosses and with cyphers scribbled  
o'er,

We schemed and puzzled, head opposed to  
head

In strife too humble to be named in verse:  
Or round the naked table, snow-white deal,  
Cherry or maple, sate in close array,  
And to the combat, Loo or Whist, led on  
A thick-ribbed army; not, as in the world,  
Neglected and ungratefully thrown by

Even for the very service they had wrought,  
But husbanded through many a long campaign.

Uncouth assemblage was it, where no few  
Had changed their functions: some, plebeian cards

Which Fate, beyond the promise of their birth,

Had dignified, and called to represent  
The persons of departed potentates.

Oh, with what echoes on the board they fell !

Ironic diamonds,—clubs, hearts, diamonds, spades,

A congregation piteously akin !

Cheap matter offered they to boyish wit,  
Those sooty knaves, precipitated down  
With scoffs and taunts, like Vulcan out of heaven :

The paramount ace, a moon in her eclipse,  
Queens gleaming through their splendour's last decay,

And monarchs surly at the wrongs sustained  
By royal visages. Meanwhile abroad  
Incessant rain was falling, or the frost  
Raged bitterly, with keen and silent tooth ;  
And, interrupting oft that eager game,  
From under Esthwaite's splitting fields of ice

The pent-up air, struggling to free itself,  
Gave out to meadow grounds and hills a loud

Protracted yelling, like the noise of wolves  
Howling in troops along the Bothnic Main.

Nor, sedulous as I have been to trace  
How Nature by extrinsic passion first  
Peopled the mind with forms sublime or fair,

And made me love them, may I here omit

How other pleasures have been mine, and joys

Of subtler origin ; how I have felt,  
Not seldom even in that tempestuous time,  
Those hallowed and pure motions of the sense

Which seem, in their simplicity, to own  
An intellectual charm ; that calm delight  
Which, if I err not, surely must belong  
To those first-born affinities that fit  
Our new existence to existing things,  
And, in our dawn of being, constitute  
The bond of union between life and joy.

Yes, I remember when the changeful earth,

And twice five summers on my mind had stamped

The faces of the moving year, even then  
I held unconscious intercourse with beauty  
Old as creation, drinking in a pure  
Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths  
Of curling mist, or from the level plain  
Of waters coloured by impending clouds.

The sands of Westmoreland, the creeks and bays

Of Cumbria's rocky limits, they can tell  
How, when the Sea threw off his evening shade,

And to the shepherd's hut on distant hills  
Sent welcome notice of the rising moon,  
How I have stood, to fancies such as these  
A stranger, linking with the spectacle  
No conscious memory of a kindred sight,  
And bringing with me no peculiar sense  
Of quietness or peace ; yet have I stood,  
Even while mine eye hath moved o'er many a league

Of shining water, gathering as it seemed,  
Through every hair-breadth in that field of light,

New pleasure like a bee among the flowers.

Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy  
Which, through all seasons, on a child's pursuits

Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy bliss

Which, like a tempest, works along the blood

And is forgotten ; even then I felt  
Gleams like the flashing of a shield ;—the earth

And common face of Nature spake to me  
Rememberable things ; sometimes, 'tis true,  
By chance collisions and quaint accidents  
(Like those ill-sorted unions, work supposed  
Of evil-minded fairies), yet not vain  
Nor profitless, if haply they impressed  
Collateral objects and appearances,  
Albeit lifeless then, and doomed to sleep  
Until maturer seasons called them forth  
To impregnate and to elevate the mind.  
—And if the vulgar joy by its own weight  
Wearied itself out of the memory,  
The scenes which were a witness of that joy

Remained in their substantial lineaments  
 Depicted on the brain, and to the eye  
 Were visible, a daily sight; and thus  
 By the impressive discipline of fear,  
 By pleasure and repeated happiness,  
 So frequently repeated, and by force  
 Of obscure feelings representative  
 Of things forgotten, these same scenes so  
 bright,

So beautiful, so majestic in themselves,  
 Though yet the day was distant, did be-  
 come

Habitually dear, and all their forms  
 And changeful colours by invisible links  
 Were fastened to the affections.

I began

My story early—not misled, I trust,  
 By an infirmity of love for days  
 Disowned by memory—ere the breath of  
 spring

Planting my snowdrops among winter  
 snows:

Nor will it seem to thee, O Friend! so  
 prompt

In sympathy, that I have lengthened out  
 With fond and feeble tongue a tedious tale.  
 Meanwhile, my hope has been, that I  
 might fetch

Invigorating thoughts from former years;  
 Might fix the wavering balance of my mind,  
 And haply meet reproaches too, whose  
 power

May spur me on, in manhood now mature  
 To honourable toil. Yet should these  
 hopes

Prove vain, and thus should neither I be  
 taught

To understand myself, nor thou to know  
 With better knowledge how the heart was  
 framed

Of him thou lovest; need I dread from  
 thee

Harsh judgments, if the song be loth to  
 quit

Those recollected hours that have the charm  
 Of visionary things, those lovely forms  
 And sweet sensations that throw back our  
 life,

And almost make remotest infancy  
 A visible scene, on which the sun is shining?

One end at least hath been attained; my  
 mind

Hath been revived, and if this genial mood

Desert me not, forthwith shall be brought  
 down

Through later years the story of my life.  
 The road lies plain before me;—'tis a  
 theme

Single and of determined bounds; and  
 hence

I choose it rather at this time, than work  
 Of ampler or more varied argument,  
 Where I might be discomfited and lost:  
 And certain hopes are with me, that to thee  
 This labour will be welcome, honoured  
 Friend!

## BOOK SECOND

### SCHOOL-TIME (*continued*)

THUS far, O Friend! have we, though  
 leaving much

Unvisited, endeavoured to retrace  
 The simple ways in which my childhood  
 walked;

Those chiefly that first led me to the love  
 Of rivers, woods, and fields. The passion  
 yet

Was in its birth, sustained as might befall  
 By nourishment that came unsought; for  
 still

From week to week, from month to month,  
 we lived

A round of tumult. Duly were our games  
 Prolonged in summer till the daylight  
 failed:

No chair remained before the doors; the  
 bench

And threshold steps were empty; fast  
 asleep

The labourer, and the old man who had  
 sat

A later lingerer; yet the revelry  
 Continued and the loud uproar: at last,  
 When all the ground was dark, and twink-  
 ling stars

Edged the black clouds, home and to bed  
 we went,

Feverish with weary joints and beating  
 minds.

Ah! is there one who ever has been young,  
 Nor needs a warning voice to tame the  
 pride

Of intellect and virtue's self-esteem?  
 One is there, though the wisest and the  
 best



Of all mankind, who covets not at times  
Union that cannot be;—who would not  
give

If so he might, to duty and to truth  
The eagerness of infantine desire?  
A tranquillising spirit presses now  
On my corporeal frame, so wide appears  
The vacancy between me and those days  
Which yet have such self-presence in my  
mind,

That, musing on them, often do I seem  
Two consciousnesses, conscious of myself  
And of some other Being. A rude mass  
Of native rock, left midway in the square  
Of our small market village, was the goal  
Or centre of these sports; and when, re-  
turned

After long absence, thither I repaired,  
Gone was the old grey stone, and in its  
place

A smart Assembly-room usurped the ground  
That had been ours. There let the fiddle  
scream,

And be ye happy! Yet, my Friends! I  
know

That more than one of you will think with  
me

Of those soft starry nights, and that old  
Dame

From whom the stone was named, who  
there had sate,

And watched her table with its huckster's  
wares

Assiduous, through the length of sixty years.

We ran a boisterous course; the year  
span round

With giddy motion. But the time ap-  
proached

That brought with it a regular desire  
For calmer pleasures, when the winning  
forms

Of Nature were collaterally attached  
To every scheme of holiday delight  
And every boyish sport, less grateful else  
And languidly pursued.

When summer came,  
Our pastime was, on bright half-holidays,  
To sweep along the plain of Windermere  
With rival oars; and the selected bourne  
Was now an Island musical with birds  
That sang and ceased not; now a Sister  
Isle

Beneath the oaks' umbrageous covert, sown

With lilies of the valley like a field;  
And now a third small Island, where sur-  
vived

In solitude the ruins of a shrine  
Once to Our Lady dedicate, and served  
Daily with chaunted rites. In such a race  
So ended, disappointment could be none,  
Uneasiness, or pain, or jealousy:  
We rested in the shade, all pleased alike,  
Conquered and conqueror. Thus the pride  
of strength,

And the vain-glory of superior skill,  
Were tempered; thus was gradually pro-  
duced

A quiet independence of the heart;  
And to my Friend who knows me I may  
add,

Fearless of blame, that hence for future days  
Ensued a diffidence and modesty,  
And I was taught to feel, perhaps too  
much,

The self-sufficing power of Solitude.

Our daily meals were frugal, Sabine fare!  
More than we wished we knew the blessing  
then

Of vigorous hunger—hence corporeal  
strength

Unsapped by delicate viands; for, exclude  
A little weekly stipend, and we lived

Through three divisions of the quartered  
year

In penniless poverty. But now to school  
From the half-yearly holidays returned,  
We came with weightier purses, that suf-  
ficed

To furnish treats more costly than the  
Dame

Of the old grey stone, from her scant board,  
supplied.

Hence rustic dinners on the cool green  
ground,

Or in the woods, or by a river side  
Or shady fountains, while among the leaves  
Soft airs were stirring, and the mid-day sun  
Unfelt shone brightly round us in our joy.

Nor is my aim neglected if I tell  
How sometimes, in the length of those half-  
years,

We from our funds drew largely;—proud  
to curb,

And eager to spur on, the galloping steed;  
And with the courteous inn-keeper, whose  
stud

Supplied our want, we haply might employ  
Sly subterfuge, if the adventure's bound  
Were distant : some famed temple where  
of yore

The Druids worshipped, or the antique  
walls

Of that large abbey, where within the Vale  
Of Nightshade, to St. Mary's honour built,  
Stands yet a mouldering pile with fractured  
arch,

Belfry, and images, and living trees ;  
A holy scene !—Along the smooth green  
turf

Our horses grazed. To more than inland  
peace,

Left by the west wind sweeping overhead  
From a tumultuous ocean, trees and towers  
In that sequestered valley may be seen,  
Both silent and both motionless alike ;  
Such the deep shelter that is there, and such  
The safeguard for repose and quietness.

Our steeds remounted and the summons  
given,

With whip and spur we through the  
chauntry flew

In uncouth race, and left the cross-legged  
knight,

And the stone-abbot, and that single wren  
Which one day sang so sweetly in the nave  
Of the old church, that—though from  
recent showers

The earth was comfortless, and, touched  
by faint

Internal breezes, sobbings of the place  
And respirations, from the roofless walls  
The shuddering ivy dripped large drops—  
yet still

So sweetly 'mid the gloom the invisible bird  
Sang to herself, that there I could have  
made

My dwelling-place, and lived for ever there  
To hear such music. Through the walls  
we flew

And down the valley, and, a circuit made  
In wantonness of heart, through rough and  
smooth

We scampered homewards. Oh, ye rocks  
and streams,

And that still spirit shed from evening air !  
Even in this joyous time I sometimes felt  
Your presence, when with slackened step  
we breathed

Along the sides of the steep hills, or when

Lighted by gleams of moonlight from the  
sea

We beat with thundering hoofs the level  
sand.

Midway on long Winander's eastern  
shore,

Within the crescent of a pleasant bay,  
A tavern stood ; no homely-featured house,  
Primeval like its neighbouring cottages,  
But 'twas a splendid place, the door beset  
With chaises, grooms, and liveries, and  
within

Decanters, glasses, and the blood-red wine.  
In ancient times, and ere the Hall was  
built

On the large island, had this dwelling been  
More worthy of a poet's love, a hut,  
Proud of its own bright fire and sycamore  
shade.

But—though the rhymes were gone that  
once inscribed

The threshold, and large golden characters,  
Spread o'er the spangled sign-board, had  
dislodged

The old Lion and usurped his place, in  
slight

And mockery of the rustic painter's hand—  
Yet, to this hour, the spot to me is dear  
With all its foolish pomp. The garden  
lay

Upon a slope surmounted by a plain  
Of a small bowling-green ; beneath us stood  
A grove, with gleams of water through the  
trees

And over the tree-tops ; nor did we want  
Refreshment, strawberries and mellow  
cream.

There, while through half an afternoon we  
played

On the smooth platform, whether skill pre-  
vailed

Or happy blunder triumphed, bursts of glee  
Made all the mountains ring. But, ere  
night-fall,

When in our pinnacle we returned at leisure  
Over the shadowy lake, and to the beach  
Of some small island steered our course  
with one,

The Minstrel of the Troop, and left him  
there,

And rowed off gently, while he blew his  
flute

Alone upon the rock—oh, then, the calm

And dead still water lay upon my mind  
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the  
sky,

Never before so beautiful, sank down  
Into my heart, and held me like a dream !  
Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and  
thus

Daily the common range of visible things  
Grew dear to me : already I began  
To love the sun ; a boy I loved the sun,  
Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge  
And surety of our earthly life, a light  
Which we behold and feel we are alive ;  
Nor for his bounty to so many worlds—  
But for this cause, that I had seen him lay  
His beauty on the morning hills, had seen  
The western mountain touch his setting orb,  
In many a thoughtless hour, when, from  
excess

Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow  
For its own pleasure, and I breathed with  
joy.

And, from like feelings, humble though  
intense,

To patriotic and domestic love  
Analogous, the moon to me was dear ;  
For I could dream away my purposes,  
Standing to gaze upon her while she hung  
Midway between the hills, as if she knew  
No other region, but belonged to thee,  
Yea, appertained by a peculiar right  
To thee and thy grey huts, thou one dear  
Vale !

Those incidental charms which first  
attached

My heart to rural objects, day by day  
Grew weaker, and I hasten on to tell  
How Nature, intervenient till this time  
And secondary, now at length was sought  
For her own sake. But who shall parcel  
out

His intellect by geometric rules,  
Split like a province into round and square ?  
Who knows the individual hour in which  
His habits were first sown, even as a seed ?  
Who that shall point as with a wand and  
say

" This portion of the river of my mind  
Came from yon fountain ? " Thou, my  
Friend ! art one

More deeply read in thy own thoughts ; to  
thee

Science appears but what in truth she is,

Not as our glory and our absolute boast,  
But as a succedaneum, and a prop  
To our infirmity. No officious slave  
Art thou of that false secondary power  
By which we multiply distinctions, then  
Deem that our puny boundaries are things  
That we perceive, and not that we have  
made.

To thee, unblinded by these formal arts,  
The unity of all hath been revealed,  
And thou wilt doubt, with me less aptly  
skilled

Than many are to range the faculties  
In scale and order, class the cabinet  
Of their sensations, and in voluble phrase  
Run through the history and birth of each  
As of a single independent thing.

Hard task, vain hope, to analyse the mind,  
If each most obvious and particular  
thought,

Not in a mystical and idle sense,  
But in the words of Reason deeply weighed,  
Hath no beginning.

Blest the infant Babe,  
(For with my best conjecture I would trace  
Our Being's earthly progress,) blest the  
Babe,

Nursed in his Mother's arms, who sinks to  
sleep

Rocked on his Mother's breast ; who with  
his soul

Drinks in the feelings of his Mother's eye !  
For him, in one dear Presence, there exists  
A virtue which irradiates and exalts

Objects through widest intercourse of sense.  
No outcast he, bewildered and depressed :

Along his infant veins are interfused  
The gravitation and the filial bond

Of nature that connect him with the world.  
Is there a flower, to which he points with  
hand

Too weak to gather it, already love  
Drawn from love's purest earthly fount for  
him

Hath beautified that flower ; already shades  
Of pity cast from inward tenderness

Do fall around him upon aught that bears  
Unightly marks of violence or harm.

Emphatically such a Being lives,  
Frail creature as he is, helpless as frail,

An inmate of this active universe :  
For, feeling has to him imparted power

That through the growing faculties of sense  
Doth like an agent of the one great Mind

Create, creator and receiver both,  
Working but in alliance with the works  
Which it beholds.—Such, verily, is the  
first

Poetic spirit of our human life,  
By uniform control of after years,  
In most, abated or suppressed; in some,  
Through every change of growth and of  
decay,  
Pre-eminent till death.

From early days,  
Beginning not long after that first time  
In which, a Babe, by intercourse of touch  
I held mute dialogues with my Mother's  
heart,

I have endeavoured to display the means  
Whereby this infant sensibility,  
Great birthright of our being, was in me  
Augmented and sustained. Yet is a path  
More difficult before me; and I fear  
That in its broken windings we shall need  
The chamois' sinews, and the eagle's wing:  
For now a trouble came into my mind  
From unknown causes. I was left alone  
Seeking the visible world, nor knowing why.  
The props of my affections were removed,  
And yet the building stood, as if sustained  
By its own spirit! All that I beheld  
Was dear, and hence to finer influxes  
The mind lay open to a more exact  
And close communion. Many are our joys  
In youth, but oh! what happiness to live  
When every hour brings palpable access  
Of knowledge, when all knowledge is de-  
light,

And sorrow is not there! The seasons  
came,

And every season wheresoe'er I moved  
Unfolded transitory qualities,  
Which, but for this most watchful power  
of love,

Had been neglected; left a register  
Of permanent relations, else unknown.  
Hence life, and change, and beauty, soli-  
tude

More active ever than "best society"—  
Society made sweet as solitude  
By silent inobtrusive sympathies,  
And gentle agitations of the mind  
From manifold distinctions, difference  
Perceived in things, where, to the un-  
watchful eye,

No difference is, and hence, from the same  
source,

Sublimar joy; for I would walk alone,  
Under the quiet stars, and at that time  
Have felt what'er there is of power in  
sound

To breathe an elevated mood, by form  
Or image unprofaned; and I would stand,  
If the night blackened with a coming storm,  
Beneath some rock, listening to notes that  
are

The ghostly language of the ancient earth,  
Or make their dim abode in distant winds.  
Thence did I drink the visionary power;  
And deem not profitless those fleeting  
moods

Of shadowy exultation: not for this,  
That they are kindred to our purer mind  
And intellectual life; but that the soul,  
Remembering how she felt, but what she  
felt

Remembering not, retains an obscure  
sense

Of possible sublimity, whereto  
With growing faculties she doth aspire,  
With faculties still growing, feeling still  
That whatsoever point they gain, they yet  
Have something to pursue.

And not alone,  
'Mid gloom and tumult, but no less 'mid  
fair

And tranquil scenes, that universal power  
And fitness in the latent qualities  
And essences of things, by which the mind  
Is moved with feelings of delight, to me  
Came strengthened with a superadded soul,  
A virtue not its own. My morning walks  
Were early;—oft before the hours of school  
I travelled round our little lake, five miles  
Of pleasant wandering. Happy time!  
more dear

For this, that one was by my side, a  
Friend,<sup>1</sup>

Then passionately loved; with heart how  
full

Would he peruse these lines! For many  
years

Have since flowed in between us, and, our  
minds

Both silent to each other, at this time  
We live as if those hours had never been.  
Nor seldom did I lift our cottage latch  
Far earlier, ere one smoke-wreath had  
risen

<sup>1</sup> The late Rev. John Fleming, of Rayrigg,  
Windermere.

From human dwelling, or the vernal thrush  
Was audible; and sate among the woods  
Alone upon some jutting eminence,  
At the first gleam of dawn-light, when the  
Vale,

Yet slumbering, lay in utter solitude.  
How shall I seek the origin? where find  
Faith in the marvellous things which then  
I felt?

Oft in these moments such a holy calm  
Would overspread my soul, that bodily eyes  
Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw  
Appeared like something in myself, a  
dream,

A prospect in the mind.

'Twere long to tell  
What spring and autumn, what the winter  
snows,  
And what the summer shade, what day  
and night,  
Evening and morning, sleep and waking,  
thought

From sources inexhaustible, poured forth  
To feed the spirit of religious love  
In which I walked with Nature. But let  
this

Be not forgotten, that I still retained  
My first creative sensibility;  
That by the regular action of the world  
My soul was unsubdued. A plastic power  
Abode with me; a forming hand, at times  
Rebellious, acting in a devious mood;  
A local spirit of his own, at war  
With general tendency, but, for the most,  
Subservient strictly to external things  
With which it communed. An auxiliar  
light

Came from my mind, which on the setting  
sun

Bestowed new splendour; the melodious  
birds,

The fluttering breezes, fountains that run on  
Murmuring so sweetly in themselves,  
obeyed

A like dominion, and the midnight storm  
Grew darker in the presence of my eye:  
Hence my obeisance, my devotion hence,  
And hence my transport.

Nor should this, perchance,  
Pass unrecorded, that I still had loved  
The exercise and produce of a toil,  
Than analytic industry to me  
More pleasing, and whose character I deem  
Is more poetic as resembling more

Creative agency. The song would speak  
Of that interminable building reared  
By observation of affinities  
In objects where no brotherhood exists  
To passive minds. My seventeenth year  
was come

And, whether from this habit rooted now  
So deeply in my mind, or from excess  
In the great social principle of life  
Coercing all things into sympathy,  
To unorganic natures were transferred  
My own enjoyments; or the power of  
truth

Coming in revelation, did converse  
With things that really are; I, at this  
time,

Saw blessings spread around me like a sea.  
Thus while the days flew by, and years  
passed on,

From Nature and her overflowing soul,  
I had received so much, that all my  
thoughts

Were steeped in feeling; I was only then  
Contented, when with bliss ineffable  
I felt the sentiment of Being spread  
O'er all that moves and all that seemeth  
still;

O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of  
thought

And human knowledge, to the human eye  
Invisible, yet liveth to the heart;

O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts  
and sings,

Or beats the gladsome air; o'er all that  
glides

Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,  
And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not  
If high the transport, great the joy I felt,  
Communing in this sort through earth and  
heaven

With every form of creature, as it looked  
Towards the Uncreated with a countenance  
Of adoration, with an eye of love.

One song they sang, and it was audible,  
Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear,  
O'ercome by humblest prelude of that strain,  
Forgot her functions, and slept undisturbed.

If this be error, and another faith  
Find easier access to the pious mind,  
Yet were I grossly destitute of all  
Those human sentiments that make this  
earth

So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice

To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye lakes

And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds  
That dwell among the hills where I was born.

If in my youth I have been pure in heart,  
If, mingling with the world, I am content  
With my own modest pleasures, and have lived

With God and Nature communing, removed  
From little enmities and low desires—

The gift is yours; if in these times of fear,  
This melancholy waste of hopes o'erthrown,  
If, 'mid indifference and apathy,  
And wicked exultation when good men  
On every side fall off, we know not how,  
To selfishness, disguised in gentle names  
Of peace and quiet and domestic love  
Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers  
On visionary minds; if, in this time  
Of dereliction and dismay, I yet  
Despair not of our nature, but retain  
A more than Roman confidence, a faith  
That fails not, in all sorrow my support,  
The blessing of my life—the gift is yours,  
Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 'tis yours,  
Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou  
    hast fed

My lofty speculations; and in thee,  
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find  
A never-failing principle of joy  
And purest passion.

Thou, my Friend! wert reared  
In the great city, 'mid far other scenes;  
But we, by different roads, at length have  
    gained

The selfsame bourne. And for this cause  
to thee

I speak, unapprehensive of contempt,  
The insinuated scoff of coward tongues,  
And all that silent language which so oft  
In conversation between man and man  
Blots from the human countenance all trace  
Of beauty and of love. For thou hast  
    sought

The truth in solitude, and, since the days  
That gave thee liberty, full long desired,  
To serve in Nature's temple, thou hast been  
The most assiduous of her ministers;  
In many things my brother, chiefly here  
In this our deep devotion.

Fare thee well!  
Health and the quiet of a healthful mind  
Attend thee! seeking oft the haunts of men.

And yet more often living with thyself,  
And for thyself, so haply shall thy days  
Be many, and a blessing to mankind.

### BOOK THIRD

#### RESIDENCE AT CAMBRIDGE

IT was a dreary morning when the wheels  
Rolled over a wide plain o'erhung with  
    clouds,

And nothing cheered our way till first we  
    saw

The long-roofed chapel of King's College  
    lift

Turrets and pinnacles in answering files,  
Extended high above a dusky grove.

Advancing, we espied upon the road  
A student clothed in gown and tasselled  
    cap,

Striding along as if o'ertasked by Time,  
Or covetous of exercise and air;  
He passed—nor was I master of my eyes  
Till he was left an arrow's flight behind.  
As near and nearer to the spot we drew,  
It seemed to suck us in with an eddy's  
    force.

Onward we drove beneath the Castle;  
    caught,

While crossing Magdalene Bridge, a glimpse  
of Cam;

And at the *Hoop* alighted, famous Inn.

My spirit was up, my thoughts were full  
of hope;

Some friends I had, acquaintances who  
    there

Seemed friends, poor simple schoolboys,  
    now hung round

With honour and importance: in a world  
Of welcome faces up and down I roved;  
Questions, directions, warnings and advice,  
Flowed in upon me, from all sides; fresh  
    day

Of pride and pleasure! to myself I seemed  
A man of business and expense, and went  
From shop to shop about my own affairs,  
To Tutor or to Tailor, as befell,  
From street to street with loose and care-  
    less mind.

I was the Dreamer, they the Dream; I  
    roamed

Delighted through the motley spectacle;  
Gowns grave, or gaudy, doctors, students,  
streets,

Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gate-  
ways, towers:

Migration strange for a stripling of the hills,  
A northern villager.

As if the change  
Had waited on some Fairy's wand, at once  
Behold me rich in monies, and attired  
In splendid garb, with hose of silk, and hair  
Powdered like rimy trees, when frost is keen.  
My lordly dressing-gown, I pass it by,  
With other signs of manhood that supplied  
The lack of beard.—The weeks went roundly  
on,

With invitations, suppers, wine and fruit,  
Smooth housekeeping within, and all with-  
out

Liberal, and suiting gentleman's array.

The Evangelist St. John my patron was:  
Three Gothic courts are his, and in the first  
Was my abiding-place, a nook obscure;  
Right underneath, the College kitchens  
made

A humming sound, less tuneable than bees,  
But hardly less industrious; with shrill  
notes

Of sharp command and scolding intermixed.  
Near me hung Trinity's loquacious clock,  
Who never let the quarters, night or day,  
Slip by him unproclaimed, and told the  
hours.

Twice over with a male and female voice.  
Her pealing organ was my neighbour too;  
And from my pillow, looking forth by light  
Of moon or favouring stars, I could behold  
The antechapel where the statue stood  
Of Newton with his prism and silent face,  
The marble index of a mind for ever  
Voyaging through strange seas of Thought,  
alone.

Of College labours, of the Lecturer's  
room

All studded round, as thick as chairs could  
stand,

With loyal students, faithful to their books,  
Half-and-half idlers, hardy recusants,  
And honest dunces—of important days,  
Examinations, when the man was weighed  
As in a balance! of excessive hopes,  
Tremblings withal and commendable fears,

Small jealousies, and triumphs good or  
bad—

Let others that know more speak as they  
know.

Such glory was but little sought by me,  
And little won. Yet from the first crude  
days

Of settling time in this untried abode,  
I was disturbed at times by prudent thoughts,  
Wishing to hope without a hope, some  
fears

About my future worldly maintenance,  
And, more than all, a strangeness in the  
mind,

A feeling that I was not for that hour,  
Nor for that place. But wherefore be cast  
down?

For (not to speak of Reason and her pure  
Reflective acts to fix the moral law  
Deep in the conscience, nor of Christian  
Hope,

Bowing her head before her sister Faith  
As one far mightier), hither I had come,  
Bear witness Truth, endowed with holy  
powers

And faculties, whether to work or feel.  
Often when the dazzling show no longer new  
Had ceased to dazzle, oftentimes did I quit  
My comrades, leave the crowd, buildings  
and groves,

And as I paced alone the level fields  
Far from those lovely sights and sounds  
sublime

With which I had been conversant, the  
mind

Drooped not; but there into herself return-  
ing,

With prompt rebound seemed fresh as here-  
tofore.

At least I more distinctly recognised  
Her native instincts: let me dare to speak  
A higher language, say that now I felt  
What independent solaces were mine,  
To mitigate the injurious sway of place  
Or circumstance, how far soever changed  
In youth, or to be changed in after years.  
As if awakened, summoned, roused, con-  
strained,

I looked for universal things; perused  
The common countenance of earth and sky:  
Earth, nowhere unembellished by some  
trace

Of that first Paradise whence man was  
driven;

And sky, whose beauty and bounty are expressed  
By the proud name she bears—the name of Heaven.

I called on both to teach me what they might;

Or, turning the mind in upon herself,  
Pored, watched, expected, listened, spread my thoughts

And spread them with a wider creeping; felt

Incumbencies more awful, visitings  
Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul,  
That tolerates the indignities of Time,  
And, from the centre of Eternity  
All finite motions overruling, lives  
In glory immutable. But peace! enough  
Here to record that I was mounting now  
To such community with highest truth—  
A track pursuing, not untrod before,  
From strict analogies by thought supplied  
Or consciousnesses not to be subdued.

To every natural form, rock, fruits, or flower,

Even the loose stones that cover the highway,

I gave a moral life: I saw them feel,  
Or linked them to some feeling: the great mass

Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all  
That I beheld respired with inward meaning.

Add that whate'er of Terror or of Love  
Or Beauty, Nature's daily face put on  
From transitory passion, unto this  
I was as sensitive as waters are  
To the sky's influence in a kindred mood  
Of passion; was obedient as a lute  
That waits upon the touches of the wind.  
Unknown, unthought of, yet I was most rich—

I had a world about me—'twas my own;  
I made it, for it only lived to me,  
And to the God who sees into the heart.  
Such sympathies, though rarely, were betrayed

By outward gestures and by visible looks:  
Some called it madness—so indeed it was,  
If child-like fruitfulness in passing joy,  
If steady moods of thoughtfulness matured  
To inspiration, sort with such a name;  
If prophecy be madness; if things viewed  
By poets in old time, and higher up  
By the first men, earth's first inhabitants,

May in these tutored days no more be seen  
With undisordered sight. But leaving this,

It was no madness, for the bodily eye  
Amid my strongest workings evermore  
Was searching out the lines of difference  
As they lie hid in all external forms,  
Near or remote, minute or vast; an eye  
Which, from a tree, a stone, a withered leaf,

To the broad ocean and the azure heavens  
Spangled with kindred multitudes of stars,  
Could find no surface where its power  
might sleep;

Which spoke perpetual logic to my soul,  
And by an unrelenting agency  
Did bind my feelings even as in a chain.

And here, O Friend! have I retraced  
my life

Up to an eminence, and told a tale  
Of matters which not falsely may be called

The glory of my youth. Of genius, power,  
Creation and divinity itself

I have been speaking, for my theme has been

What passed within me. Not of outward things

Done visibly for other minds, words, signs,  
Symbols or actions, but of my own heart  
Have I been speaking, and my youthful mind.

O Heavens! how awful is the might of souls,

And what they do within themselves while yet

The yoke of earth is new to them, the world

Nothing but a wild field where they were sown.

This is, in truth, heroic argument,  
This genuine prowess, which I wished to touch

With hand however weak, but in the main  
It lies far hidden from the reach of words.  
Points have we all of us within our souls  
Where all stand single; this I feel, and make

Breathings for incommunicable powers;  
But is not each a memory to himself,  
And, therefore, now that we must quit this theme,

I am not heartless, for there's not a man



That lives who hath not known his god-like  
hours,  
And feels not what an empire we inherit  
As natural beings in the strength of Nature.

No more : for now into a populous plain  
We must descend. A Traveller I am,  
Whose tale is only of himself ; even so,  
So be it, if the pure of heart be prompt  
To follow, and if thou, my honoured  
Friend !

Who in these thoughts art ever at my side,  
Support, as heretofore, my fainting steps.

It hath been told, that when the first  
delight  
That flashed upon me from this novel show  
Had failed, the mind returned into herself ;  
Yet true it is, that I had made a change  
In climate, and my nature's outward coat  
Changed also slowly and insensibly,  
Full oft the quiet and exalted thoughts  
Of loneliness gave way to empty noise  
And superficial pastimes ; now and then  
Forced labour, and more frequently forced  
hopes ;

And, worst of all, a treasonable growth  
Of indecisive judgments, that impaired  
And shook the mind's simplicity. — And  
yet

This was a gladsome time. Could I be-  
hold—

Who, less insensible than sodden clay  
In a sea-river's bed at ebb of tide,  
Could have beheld, — with undelighted  
heart,

So many happy youths, so wide and fair  
A congregation in its budding-time  
Of health, and hope, and beauty, all at  
once

So many divers samples from the growth  
Of life's sweet season—could have seen  
unmoved

That miscellaneous garland of wild flowers  
Decking the matron temples of a place  
So famous through the world ? To me, at  
least,

It was a goodly prospect : for, in sooth,  
Though I had learnt betimes to stand un-  
propped,

And independent musings pleased me so  
That spells seemed on me when I was  
alone,

Yet could I only cleave to solitude

In lonely places ; if a throng was near  
That way I leaned by nature ; for my  
heart  
Was social, and loved idleness and joy.

Not seeking those who might participate  
My deeper pleasures (nay, I had not once,  
Though not unused to mutter lonesome  
songs,

Even with myself divided such delight,  
Or looked that way for aught that might be  
clothed

In human language), easily I passed  
From the remembrances of better things,  
And slipped into the ordinary works  
Of careless youth, unburthened, unalarmed.  
*Caverns* there were within my mind which  
sun

Could never penetrate, yet did there not  
Want store of leafy *arbours* where the light  
Might enter in at will. Companionships,  
Friendships, acquaintances, were welcome  
all.

We sauntered, played, or rioted ; we talked  
Unprofitable talk at morning hours ;  
Drifted about along the streets and walks,  
Read lazily in trivial books, went forth  
To gallop through the country in blind zeal  
Of senseless horsemanship, or on the breast  
Of Cam sailed boisterously, and let the stars  
Come forth, perhaps without one quiet  
thought.

Such was the tenor of the second act  
In this new life. Imagination slept,  
And yet not utterly. I could not print  
Ground where the grass had yielded to the  
steps

Of generations of illustrious men,  
Unmoved. I could not always lightly pass  
Through the same gateways, sleep where  
they had slept,

Wake where they waked, range that in-  
closure old,

That garden of great intellects, undisturbed.  
Place also by the side of this dark sense  
Of noble feeling, that those spiritual men,  
Even the great Newton's own ethereal self,  
Seemed humbled in these precincts—hence  
to be

The more endeared. Their several *men-  
ries* here

(Even like their persons in their portrait  
clothed

With the accustomed garb of daily life)  
Put on a lowly and a touching grace  
Of more distinct humanity, that left  
All genuine admiration unimpaired.

Beside the pleasant Mill of Trompington  
I laughed with Chaucer in the hawthorn  
shade;

Heard him, while birds were warbling, tell  
his tales

Of amorous passion. And that gentle  
Bard,

Chosen by the Muses for their Page of  
State—

Sweet Spenser, moving through his clouded  
heaven

With the moon's beauty and the moon's  
soft pace,

I called him Brother, Englishman, and  
Friend!

Yea, our blind Poet, who in his later day,  
Stood almost single; uttering odious  
truth—

Darkness before, and danger's voice behind,  
Soul awful—if the earth has ever lodged  
An awful soul—I seemed to see him here  
Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress  
Bounding before me, yet a stripling youth—  
A boy, no better, with his rosy cheeks  
Angelical, keen eye, courageous look,  
And conscious step of purity and pride.  
Among the band of my compeers was one  
Whom chance had stationed in the very  
room

Honoured by Milton's name. O temperate  
Bard!

Be it confessed that, for the first time, seated  
Within thy innocent lodge and oratory,  
One of a festive circle, I poured out  
Libations, to thy memory drank, till pride  
And gratitude grew dizzy in a brain  
Never excited by the fumes of wine  
Before that hour, or since. Then, forth I  
ran

From the assembly; through a length of  
streets,

Ran, ostrich-like, to reach our chapel door  
In not a desperate or opprobrious time,  
Albeit long after the importunate bell  
Had stopped, with wearisome Cassandra  
voice

No longer haunting the dark winter night.  
Call back, O Friend! a moment to thy  
mind,

The place itself and fashion of the rites.  
With careless ostentation shouldering up  
My surplice, through the inferior throng I  
clove

Of the plain Burghers, who in audience  
stood

On the last skirts of their permitted ground,  
Under the pealing organ. Empty thoughts!  
I am ashamed of them: and that great  
Bard,

And thou, O Friend! who in thy ample  
mind

Hast placed me high above my best deserts,  
Ye will forgive the weakness of that hour,  
In some of its unworthy vanities,  
Brother to many more.

In this mixed sort  
The months passed on, remissly, not given  
up

To wilful alienation from the right,  
Or walks of open scandal, but in vague  
And loose indifference, easy likings, aims  
Of a low pitch—duty and zeal dismissed,  
Yet Nature, or a happy course of things  
Not doing in their stead the needful work.  
The memory languidly revolved, the heart  
Reposed in noontide rest, the inner pulse  
Of contemplation almost failed to beat.  
Such life might not inaptly be compared  
To a floating island, an amphibious spot  
Unsound, of spongy texture, yet withal  
Not wanting a fair face of water weeds  
And pleasant flowers. The thirst of living  
praise,

Fit reverence for the glorious Dead, the sight  
Of those long vistas, sacred catacombs,  
Where mighty *minds* lie visibly entombed,  
Have often stirred the heart of youth, and  
bred

A fervent love of rigorous discipline.—  
Alas! such high emotion touched not me.  
Look was there none within these walls to  
shame

My easy spirits, and discountenance  
Their light composure, far less to instil  
A calm resolve of mind, firmly addressed  
To puissant efforts. Nor was this the  
blame

Of others but my own; I should, in truth,  
As far as doth concern my single self,  
Misdeem most widely, lodging it elsewhere:  
For I, bred up, 'mid Nature's luxuries,  
Was a spoiled child, and, rambling like  
the wind,

As I had done in daily intercourse  
With those crystalline rivers, solemn heights,  
And mountains, ranging like a fowl of the  
air,

I was ill-tutored for captivity ;  
To quit my pleasure, and, from month to  
month,

Take up a station calmly on the perch  
Of sedentary peace. Those lovely forms  
Had also left less space within my mind,  
Which, wrought upon instinctively, had  
found

A freshness in those objects of her love,  
A winning power, beyond all other power.  
Not that I slighted books,—that were to  
lack

All sense,—but other passions in me ruled,  
Passions more fervent, making me less  
prompt

To in-door study than was wise or well,  
Or suited to those years. Yet I, though  
used

In magisterial liberty to rove,  
Culling such flowers of learning as might  
tempt

A random choice, could shadow forth a  
place

(If now I yield not to a flattering dream)  
Whose studious aspect should have bent  
me down

To instantaneous service ; should at once  
Have made me pay to science and to arts  
And written lore, acknowledged my liege  
lord,

A homage frankly offered up, like that  
Which I had paid to Nature. Toil and  
pains

In this recess, by thoughtful Fancy built,  
Should spread from heart to heart ; and  
stately groves,

Majestic edifices, should not want  
A corresponding dignity within.

The congregating temper that pervades  
Our unripe years, not wasted, should be  
taught

To minister to works of high attempt—  
Works which the enthusiast would perform  
with love.

Youth should be awed, religiously possessed  
With a conviction of the power that waits  
On knowledge, when sincerely sought and  
prized

For its own sake, on glory and on praise  
If but by labour won, and fit to endure

The passing day ; should learn to put aside  
Her trappings here, should strip them off  
abashed

Before antiquity and steadfast truth  
And strong book-mindedness ; and over all  
A healthy sound simplicity should reign,  
A seemly plainness, name it what you will,  
Republican or pious.

If these thoughts

Are a gratuitous emblazonry  
That mocks the recreant age *we* live in,  
then

Be Folly and False-seeming free to affect  
Whatever formal gait of discipline  
Shall raise them highest in their own  
esteem—

Let them parade among the Schools at will,  
But spare the House of God. Was ever  
known

The witless shepherd who persists to drive  
A flock that thirsts not to a pool disliked ?  
A weight must surely hang on days begun  
And ended with such mockery. Be wise,  
Ye Presidents and Deans, and, till the spirit  
Of ancient times revive, and youth be trained  
At home in pious service, to your bells  
Give seasonable rest, for 'tis a sound  
Hollow as ever vexed the tranquil air ;  
And your officious doings bring disgrace  
On the plain steeples of our English Church,  
Whose worship, 'mid remotest village trees,  
Suffers for this. Even Science, too, at  
hand

In daily sight of this irreverence,  
Is smitten thence with an unnatural taint,  
Loses her just authority, falls beneath  
Collateral suspicion, else unknown.

This truth escaped me not, and I confess,  
That having 'mid my native hills given loose  
To a schoolboy's vision, I had raised a pile  
Upon the basis of the coming time,  
That fell in ruins round me. Oh, what joy  
To see a sanctuary for our country's youth  
Informed with such a spirit as might be  
Its own protection ; a primeval grove,  
Where, though the shades with cheerfulness  
were filled,

Nor indigent of songs warbled from crowds  
In under-coverts, yet the countenance  
Of the whole place should bear a stamp of  
awe ;

A habitation sober and demure  
For ruminating creatures ; a domain  
For quiet things to wander in ; a haunt

In which the heron should delight to feed  
By the shy rivers, and the pelican  
Upon the cypress spire in lonely thought  
Might sit and sun himself.—Alas ! Alas !  
In vain for such solemnity I looked ;  
Mine eyes were crossed by butterflies, ears  
vexed

By chattering popinjays ; the inner heart  
Seemed trivial, and the impresses without  
Of a too gaudy region.

Different sight

Those venerable Doctors saw of old,  
When all who dwelt within these famous  
walls

Led in abstemiousness a studious life ;  
When, in forlorn and naked chambers  
cooped

And crowded, o'er the ponderous books  
they hung

Like caterpillars eating out their way  
In silence, or with keen devouring noise  
Not to be tracked or fathered. Princes  
then

At matins froze, and couched at curfew-  
time,

Trained up through piety and zeal to prize  
Spare diet, patient labour, and plain weeds.  
O seat of Arts ! renowned throughout the  
world !

Far different service in those homely days  
The Muses' modest nurslings underwent  
From their first childhood : in that glorious  
time

When Learning, like a stranger come from  
far,

Sounding through Christian lands her  
trumpet, roused

Peasant and king ; when boys and youths,  
the growth

Of ragged villages and crazy huts,  
Forsook their homes, and, errant in the  
quest

Of Patron, famous school or friendly nook,  
Where, pensioned, they in shelter might sit  
down,

From town to town and through wide  
scattered realms

Journeyed with ponderous folios in their  
hands ;

And often, starting from some covert place,  
Saluted the chance comer on the road,  
Crying, "An obolus, a penny give  
To a poor scholar !"—when illustrious  
men,

Lovers of truth, by penury constrained,  
Bucer, Erasmus, or Melancthon, read  
Before the doors or windows of their cells  
By moonshine through mere lack of taper  
light.

But peace to vain regrets ! We see but  
darkly

Even when we look behind us, and best  
things

Are not so pure by nature that they needs  
Must keep to all, as fondly all believe,  
Their highest promise. If the mariner,  
When at reluctant distance he hath passed  
Some tempting island, could but know the  
ills

That must have fallen upon him had he  
brought

His bark to land upon the wished-for shore,  
Good cause would oft be his to thank the  
surf

Whose white belt scared him thence, or  
wind that blew

Inexorably adverse : for myself  
I grieve not ; happy is the gowned youth,  
Who only misses what I missed, who falls  
No lower than I fell.

I did not love,  
Judging not ill perhaps, the timid course  
Of our scholastic studies ; could have wished  
To see the river flow with ampler range  
And freer pace ; but more, far more, I  
grieved

To see displayed among an eager few,  
Who in the field of contest persevered,  
Passions unworthy of youth's generous heart  
And mounting spirit, pitifully repaid,  
When so disturbed, whatever palms are  
won.

From these I turned to travel with the shoal  
Of more unthinking natures, easy minds  
And pillowy ; yet not wanting love that  
makes

The day pass lightly on, when foresight  
sleeps,

And wisdom and the pledges interchanged  
With our own inner being are forgot.

Yet was this deep vacation not given up  
To utter waste. Hitherto I had stood  
In my own mind remote from social life,  
(At least from what we commonly so  
name,)

Like a lone shepherd on a promontory

Who lacking occupation looks far forth  
 Into the boundless sea, and rather makes  
 Than finds what he beholds. And sure it is,  
 That this first transit from the smooth  
 delights

And wild outlandish walks of simple youth  
 To something that resembles an approach  
 Towards human business, to a privileged  
 world

Within a world, a midway residence  
 With all its intervenient imagery,  
 Did better suit my visionary mind,  
 Far better, than to have been bolted forth,  
 Thrust out abruptly into Fortune's way  
 Among the conflicts of substantial life;  
 By a more just gradation did lead on  
 To higher things; more naturally matured,  
 For permanent possession, better fruits,  
 Whether of truth or virtue, to ensue.  
 In serious mood, but oftener, I confess,  
 With playful zest of fancy, did we note  
 (How could we less?) the manners and the  
 ways

Of those who lived distinguished by the  
 badge

Of good or ill report; or those with whom  
 By frame of Academic discipline  
 We were perforce connected, men whose  
 sway

And known authority of office served  
 To set our minds on edge, and did no more.  
 Nor wanted we rich pastime of this kind,  
 Found everywhere, but chiefly in the ring  
 Of the grave Elders, men unsoured, grotesque

In character, tricked out like aged trees  
 Which through the lapse of their infirmity  
 Give ready place to any random seed  
 That chooses to be reared upon their trunks.

Here on my view, confronting vividly  
 Those shepherd swains whom I had lately  
 left

Appeared a different aspect of old age;  
 How different! yet both distinctly marked,  
 Objects embossed to catch the general eye,  
 Or portraitures for special use designed,  
 As some might seem, so aptly do they  
 serve

To illustrate Nature's book of rudiments—  
 That book upheld as with maternal care  
 When she would enter on her tender scheme  
 Of teaching comprehension with delight,  
 And mingling playful with pathetic thoughts.

The surfaces of artificial life  
 And manners finely wrought, the delicate  
 race

Of colours, lurking, gleaming up and down  
 Through that state arras woven with silk  
 and gold;

This wily interchange of snaky hues,  
 Willingly or unwillingly revealed,  
 I neither knew nor cared for; and as such  
 Were wanting here, I took what might be  
 found

Of less elaborate fabric. At this day  
 I smile, in many a mountain solitude  
 Conjuring up scenes as obsolete in freaks  
 Of character, in points of wit as broad,  
 As aught by wooden images performed  
 For entertainment of the gaping crowd  
 At wake or fair. And oftentimes do flit  
 Remembrances before me of old men—  
 Old humourists, who have been long in  
 their graves,

And having almost in my mind put off  
 Their human names, have into phantoms  
 passed

Of texture midway between life and books.

I play the loiterer: 'tis enough to note  
 That here in dwarf proportions were expressed

The limbs of the great world; its eager  
 strives

Collaterally pourtrayed, as in mock fight,  
 A tournament of blows, some hardly dealt  
 Though short of mortal combat; and what-  
 e'er

Might in this pageant be supposed to hit  
 An artless rustic's notice, this way less,  
 More that way, was not wasted upon me—  
 And yet the spectacle may well demand  
 A more substantial name, no mimic show,  
 Itself a living part of a live whole,  
 A creek in the vast sea; for, all degrees  
 And shapes of spurious fame and short-  
 lived praise

Here sate in state, and fed with daily alms  
 Retainers won away from solid good;  
 And here was Labour, his own bond-slave;  
 Hope,

That never set the pains against the prize;  
 Idleness halting with his weary clog,  
 And poor misguided Shame, and witless  
 Fear,

And simple Pleasure foraging for Death;  
 Honour misplaced, and Dignity astray;

Feuds, factions, flatteries, enmity, and guile,  
Murmuring submission, and bald govern-  
ment,

(The idol weak as the idolater),  
And Decency and Custom starving Truth,  
And blind Authority beating with his staff  
The child that might have led him; Empti-  
ness

Followed as of good omen, and meek Worth  
Left to herself unheard of and unknown.

Of these and other kindred notices  
I cannot say what portion is in truth  
The naked recollection of that time,  
And what may rather have been called to life  
By after-meditation. But delight  
That, in an easy temper lulled asleep,  
Is still with Innocence its own reward,  
This was not wanting. Carelessly I roamed  
As through a wide museum from whose  
stores

A casual rarity is singled out  
And has its brief perusal, then gives way  
To others, all supplanted in their turn;  
Till 'mid this crowded neighbourhood of  
things

That are by nature most unneighbourly,  
The head turns round and cannot right  
itself;

And though an aching and a barren sense  
Of gay confusion still be uppermost,  
With few wise longings and but little love,  
Yet to the memory something cleaves at  
last,

Whence profit may be drawn in times to  
come.

Thus in submissive idleness, my Friend !  
The labouring time of autumn, winter,  
spring,  
Eight months I rolled pleasingly away; the  
ninth  
Came and returned me to my native hills.

#### BOOK FOURTH

##### SUMMER VACATION

BRIGHT was the summer's noon when  
quickenings steps  
Followed each other till a dreary moor  
Was crossed, a bare ridge clomb, upon  
whose top  
Standing alone, as from a rampart's edge,

I overlooked the bed of Windermere,  
Like a vast river, stretching in the sun.  
With exultation, at my feet I saw  
Lake, islands, promontories, gleaming bays,  
A universe of Nature's fairest forms  
Proudly revealed with instantaneous burst,  
Magnificent, and beautiful, and gay.  
I bounded down the hill shouting again  
For the old Ferryman; to the shout the  
rocks

Replied, and when the Charon of the flood  
Had staid his oars, and touched the jutting  
pier,

I did not step into the well-known boat  
Without a cordial greeting. Thence with  
speed

Up the familiar hill I took my way  
Towards that sweet Valley<sup>1</sup> where I had  
been reared;

'Twas but a short hour's walk, ere veering  
round

I saw the snow-white church upon her hill  
Sit like a throned Lady, sending out  
A gracious look all over her domain.  
Yon azure smoke betrays the lurking town;  
With eager footsteps I advance and reach  
The cottage threshold where my journey  
closed.

Glad welcome had I, with some tears,  
perhaps,

From my old Dame, so kind and motherly,  
While she perused me with a parent's pride.  
The thoughts of gratitude shall fall like dew  
Upon thy grave, good creature ! While  
my heart

Can beat never will I forget thy name.  
Heaven's blessing be upon thee where thou  
liest

After thy innocent and busy stir  
In narrow cares, thy little daily growth  
Of calm enjoyments, after eighty years,  
And more than eighty, of untroubled life;  
Childless, yet by the strangers to thy blood  
Honoured with little less than filial love.  
What joy was mine to see thee once again,  
Thee and thy dwelling, and a crowd of  
things

About its narrow precincts all beloved,  
And many of them seeming yet my own !  
Why should I speak of what a thousand  
hearts

Have felt, and every man alive can guess ?  
The rooms, the court, the garden were not left

<sup>1</sup> Hawkshead.

Long unsaluted, nor the sunny seat  
Round the stone table under the dark pine,  
Friendly to studious or to festive hours;  
Nor that unruly child of mountain birth,  
The famous brook, who, soon as he was  
boxed

Within our garden, found himself at once,  
As if by trick insidious and unkind,  
Stripped of his voice and left to dimple  
down

(Without an effort and without a will)  
A channel paved by man's officious care.  
I looked at him and smiled, and smiled  
again,

And in the press of twenty thousand  
thoughts,

"Ha," quoth I, "pretty prisoner, are you  
there!"

Well might sarcastic Fancy then have  
whispered,

"An emblem here behold of thy own life;  
In its late course of even days with all  
Their smooth enthrallment;" but the heart  
was full,

Too full for that reproach. My aged Dame  
Walked proudly at my side: she guided  
me;

I willing, nay—nay, wishing to be led.  
—The face of every neighbour whom I met  
Was like a volume to me; some were hailed  
Upon the road, some busy at their work,  
Unceremonious greetings interchanged  
With half the length of a long field between.  
Among my schoolfellows I scattered round  
Like recognitions, but with some constraint  
Attended, doubtless, with a little pride,  
But with more shame, for my habiliments,  
The transformation wrought by gay attire.  
Not less delighted did I take my place  
At our domestic table: and, dear Friend!  
In this endeavour simply to relate  
A Poet's history, may I leave untold  
The thankfulness with which I laid me  
down

In my accustomed bed, more welcome now  
Perhaps than if it had been more desired  
Or been more often thought of with regret;  
That lowly bed whence I had heard the  
wind

Roar, and the rain beat hard; where I so  
oft

Had lain awake on summer nights to watch  
The moon in splendour couched among the  
leaves

Of a tall ash, that near our cottage stood;  
Had watched her with fixed eyes while to  
and fro

In the dark summit of the waving tree  
She rocked with every impulse of the breeze.

Among the favourites whom it pleased  
me well

To see again, was one by ancient right  
Our inmate, a rough terrier of the hills;  
By birth and call of nature pre-ordained  
To hunt the badger and unearth the fox  
Among the impervious crags, but having  
been

From youth our own adopted, he had  
passed

Into a gentler service. And when first  
The boyish spirit flagged, and day by day  
Along my veins I kindled with the stir,  
The fermentation, and the vernal heat  
Of poesy, affecting private shades  
Like a sick Lover, then this dog was used  
To watch me, an attendant and a friend,  
Obsequious to my steps early and late,  
Though often of such dilatory walk  
Tired, and uneasy at the halts I made.  
A hundred times when, roving high and  
low,

I have been harassed with the toil of verse,  
Much pains and little progress, and at once  
Some lovely Image in the song rose up  
Full-formed, like Venus rising from the sea;  
Then have I darted forwards to let loose  
My hand upon his back with stormy joy,  
Caressing him again and yet again.  
And when at evening on the public way  
I sauntered, like a river murmuring  
And talking to itself when all things else  
Are still, the creature trotted on before;  
Such was his custom; but when'er he met  
A passenger approaching, he would turn  
To give me timely notice, and straightway,  
Grateful for that admonishment, I hushed  
My voice, composed my gait, and, with  
the air

And mien of one whose thoughts are free,  
advanced

To give and take a greeting that might save  
My name from piteous rumours, such as  
wait

On men suspected to be crazed in brain.

Those walks well worthy to be prized  
and loved—

Regretted!—that word, too, was on my tongue,

But they were richly laden with all good,  
And cannot be remembered but with thanks  
And gratitude, and perfect joy of heart—  
Those walks in all their freshness now came back

Like a returning Spring. When first I made

Once more the circuit of our little lake,  
If ever happiness hath lodged with man,  
That day consummate happiness was mine.  
Wide-spreading, steady, calm, contemplative.

The sun was set, or setting, when I left  
Our cottage door, and evening soon brought on

A sober hour, not winning or serene,  
For cold and raw the air was, and untuned :  
But as a face we love is sweetest then  
When sorrow damps it, or, whatever look  
It chance to wear, is sweetest if the heart  
Have fulness in herself ; even so with me  
It fared that evening. Gently did my soul  
Put off her veil, and, self-transmuted, stood  
Naked, as in the presence of her God.  
While on I walked, a comfort seemed to touch

A heart that had not been disconsolate :  
Strength came where weakness was not known to be,

At least not felt ; and restoration came  
Like an intruder knocking at the door  
Of unacknowledged weariness. I took  
The balance, and with firm hand weighed myself.

—Of that external scene which round me lay,

Little, in this abstraction, did I see ;  
Remembered less ; but I had inward hopes  
And swellings of the spirit, was rapt and soothed,

Conversed with promises, had glimmering views

How life pervades the undecaying mind ;  
How the immortal soul with God-like power

Informs, creates, and thaws the deepest sleep

That time can lay upon her ; how on earth,  
Man, if he do but live within the light  
Of high endeavours, daily spreads abroad  
His being armed with strength that cannot fail.

Nor was there want of milder thoughts, of love,

Of innocence, and holiday repose ;  
And more than pastoral quiet, 'mid the stir  
Of boldest projects, and a peaceful end  
At last, or glorious, by endurance won.  
Thus musing, in a wood I sate me down  
Alone, continuing there to muse : the slopes  
And heights meanwhile were slowly over-spread

With darkness, and before a rippling breeze  
The long lake lengthened out its hoary line,  
And in the sheltered coppice where I sate,  
Around me from among the hazel leaves,  
Now here, now there, moved by the straggling wind,

Came ever and anon a breath-like sound,  
Quick as the pantings of the faithful dog,  
The off and on companion of my walk ;  
And such, at times, believing them to be,  
I turned my head to look if he were there ;  
Then into solemn thought I passed once more.

A freshness also found I at this time  
In human Life, the daily life of those  
Whose occupations really I loved ;  
The peaceful scene oft filled me with surprise

Changed like a garden in the heat of spring  
After an eight-days' absence. For (to omit  
The things which were the same and yet appeared

Far otherwise) amid this rural solitude,  
A narrow Vale where each was known to all,

'Twas not indifferent to a youthful mind  
To mark some sheltering bower or sunny nook

Where an old man had used to sit alone,  
Now vacant ; pale-faced babes whom I had left

In arms, now rosy prattlers at the feet  
Of a pleased grandame tottering up and down ;

And growing girls whose beauty, filched away

With all its pleasant promises, was gone  
To deck some slighted playmate's homely cheek.

Yes, I had something of a subtler sense,  
And often looking round was moved to smiles



Such as a delicate work of humour breeds;  
I read, without design, the opinions,  
thoughts,

Of those plain-living people now observed  
With clearer knowledge; with another eye  
I saw the quiet woodman in the woods,  
The shepherd roam the hills. With new  
delight,

This chiefly, did I note my grey-haired  
Dame;

Saw her go forth to church or other work  
Of state equipped in monumental trim;  
Short velvet cloak, (her bonnet of the like),  
A mantle such as Spanish Cavaliers  
Wore in old times. Her smooth domestic  
life,

Affectionate without disquietude,  
Her talk, her business, pleased me; and  
no less

Her clear though shallow stream of piety  
That ran on Sabbath days a fresher course;  
With thoughts unfelt till now I saw her  
read

Her Bible on hot Sunday afternoons,  
And loved the book, when she had dropped  
asleep

And made of it a pillow for her head.

Nor less do I remember to have felt,  
Distinctly manifested at this time,  
A human-heartedness about my love  
For objects hitherto the absolute wealth  
Of my own private being and no more;  
Which I had loved, even as a blessed spirit  
Or Angel, if he were to dwell on earth,  
Might love in individual happiness.

But now there opened on me other thoughts  
Of change, congratulation or regret,  
A pensive feeling! It spread far and wide;  
The trees, the mountains shared it, and the  
brooks,

The stars of Heaven, now seen in their old  
haunts—

White Sirius glittering o'er the southern  
crag,

Orion with his belt, and those fair Seven,  
Acquaintances of every little child,  
And Jupiter, my own beloved star!  
Whatever shadings of mortality,  
Whatever imports from the world of death  
Had come among these objects heretofore,

Were, in the main, of mood less tender:  
strong,

Deep, gloomy were they, and severe; the  
scatterings

Of awe or tremulous dread, that had given  
way

In later youth to yearnings of a love  
Enthusiastic, to delight and hope.

As one who hangs down-bending from  
the side

Of a slow-moving boat, upon the breast  
Of a still water, solacing himself  
With such discoveries as his eye can make  
Beneath him in the bottom of the deep,  
Sees many beauteous sights—weeds, fishes,  
flowers,

Grots, pebbles, roots of trees, and fancies  
more,

Yet often is perplexed, and cannot part  
The shadow from the substance, rocks and  
sky,

Mountains and clouds, reflected in the depth  
Of the clear flood, from things which there  
abide

In their true dwelling; now is crossed by  
gleam

Of his own image, by a sunbeam now,  
And wavering motions sent he knows not  
whence,

Impediments that make his task more  
sweet;

Such pleasant office have we long pursued  
Incumbent o'er the surface of past time  
With like success, nor often have appeared  
Shapes fairer or less doubtfully discerned  
Than these to which the Tale, indulgent  
Friend!

Would now direct thy notice. Yet in spite  
Of pleasure won, and knowledge not with-  
held,

There was an inner falling off—I loved,  
Loved deeply all that had been loved before,  
More deeply even than ever: but a swarm  
Of heady schemes jostling each other,  
gawds,

And feast and dance, and public revelry,  
And sports and games (too grateful in  
themselves,

Yet in themselves less grateful, I believe,  
Than as they were a badge glossy and fresh  
Of manliness and freedom) all conspired  
To lure my mind from firm habitual quest  
Of feeding pleasures, to depress the zeal  
And damp those yearnings which had once  
been mine—

A wild, unworldly-minded youth, given up  
To his own eager thoughts. It would  
demand  
Some skill, and longer time than may be  
spared  
To paint these vanities, and how they  
wrought  
In haunts where they, till now, had been  
unknown.  
It seemed the very garments that I wore  
Preyed on my strength, and stopped the  
quiet stream  
Of self-forgetfulness.

Yes, that heartless chase  
Of trivial pleasures was a poor exchange  
For books and nature at that early age.  
'Tis true, some casual knowledge might be  
gained

Of character or life; but at that time,  
Of manners put to school I took small note,  
And all my deeper passions lay elsewhere.  
Far better had it been to exalt the mind  
By solitary study, to uphold  
Intense desire through meditative peace;  
And yet, for chastisement of these regrets,  
The memory of one particular hour  
Doth here rise up against me. 'Mid a  
throng  
Of maids and youths, old men, and matrons  
staid,

A medley of all tempers, I had passed  
The night in dancing, gaiety, and mirth,  
With din of instruments and shuffling feet,  
And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,  
And unaimed prattle flying up and down;  
Spirits upon the stretch, and here and there  
Slight shocks of young love-liking inter-  
spersed,

Whose transient pleasure mounted to the  
head,

And tingled through the veins. Ere we  
retired,

The cock had crowed, and now the eastern  
sky

Was kindling, not unseen, from humble  
copse

And open field, through which the pathway  
wound,

And homeward led my steps. Magnificent  
The morning rose, in memorable pomp,  
Glorious as e'er I had beheld—in front,  
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,  
The solid mountains shone, bright as the  
clouds,

Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean  
light;

And in the meadows and the lower grounds  
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn—  
Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,  
And labourers going forth to till the fields.  
Ah! need I say, dear Friend! that to the  
brim

My heart was full; I made no vows, but  
vows

Were then made for me; bond unknown to  
me

Was given, that I should be, else sinning  
greatly,

A dedicated Spirit. On I walked  
In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

Strange rendezvous! My mind was at  
that time

A parti-coloured show of grave and gay,  
Solid and light, short-sighted and profound;  
Of inconsiderate habits and sedate,  
Consorting in one mansion unapproved.

The worth I knew of powers that I pos-  
sessed,

Though slighted and too oft misused.  
Besides,

That summer, swarming as it did with  
thoughts

Transient and idle, lacked not intervals  
When Folly from the frown of fleeting  
Time

Shrunk, and the mind experienced in herself  
Conformity as just as that of old

To the end and written spirit of God's  
works,

Whether held forth in Nature or in Man,  
Through pregnant vision, separate or con-  
joined.

When from our better selves we have too  
long

Been parted by the hurrying world, and  
droop,

Sick of its business, of its pleasures tired,  
How gracious, how benign, is Solitude;

How potent a mere image of her sway;  
Most potent when impressed upon the mind

With an appropriate human centre—hermit,  
Deep in the bosom of the wilderness;

Voluntary (in vast cathedral, where no foot  
Is treading, where no other face is seen)

Kneeling at prayers; or watchman on the  
top

Of lighthouse, beaten by Atlantic waves ;  
 Or as the soul of that great Power is met  
 Sometimes embodied on a public road,  
 When, for the night deserted, it assumes  
 A character of quiet more profound  
 Than pathless wastes.

Once, when those summer months  
 Were flown, and autumn brought its annual  
 show

Of oars with oars contending, sails with  
 sails,

Upon Winander's spacious breast, it chanced  
 That—after I had left a flower-decked room  
 (Whose in-door pastime, lighted up, sur-  
 vived

To a late hour), and spirits overwrought  
 Were making night do penance for a day  
 Spent in a round of strenuous idleness—  
 My homeward course led up a long ascent,  
 Where the road's watery surface, to the top  
 Of that sharp rising, glittered to the moon  
 And bore the semblance of another stream  
 Stealing with silent lapse to join the brook  
 That murmured in the vale. All else was  
 still ;

No living thing appeared in earth or air,  
 And, save the flowing water's peaceful  
 voice,

Sound there was none—but, lo ! an uncouth  
 shape,

Shown by a sudden turning of the road,  
 So near that, slipping back into the shade  
 Of a thick hawthorn, I could mark him well,  
 Myself unseen. He was of stature tall,  
 A span above man's common measure, tall,  
 Stiff, lank, and upright ; a more meagre  
 man

Was never seen before by night or day.  
 Long were his arms, pallid his hands ; his  
 mouth

Looked ghastly in the moonlight: from  
 behind,

A mile-stone propped him ; I could also ken  
 That he was clothed in military garb,  
 Though faded, yet entire. Companionless,  
 No dog attending, by no staff sustained,  
 He stood, and in his very dress appeared  
 A desolation, a simplicity,  
 To which the trappings of a gaudy world  
 Make a strange back-ground. From his  
 lips, ere long,

Issued low muttered sounds, as if of pain  
 Or some uneasy thought ; yet still his form  
 Kept the same awful steadiness—at his feet

His shadow lay, and moved not. From  
 self-blame

Not wholly free, I watched him thus ; at  
 length

Subduing my heart's specious cowardice,  
 I left the shady nook where I had stood  
 And hailed him. Slowly from his resting-  
 place

He rose, and with a lean and wasted arm  
 In measured gesture lifted to his head  
 Returned my salutation ; then resumed  
 His station as before ; and when I asked  
 His history, the veteran, in reply,  
 Was neither slow nor eager ; but, unmoved,  
 And with a quiet uncomplaining voice,  
 A stately air of mild indifference,

He told in few plain words a soldier's tale—  
 That in the Tropic Islands he had served,  
 Whence he had landed scarcely three weeks  
 past ;

That on his landing he had been dismissed,  
 And now was travelling towards his native  
 home.

This heard, I said, in pity, "Come with  
 me."

He stooped, and straightway from the  
 ground took up

An oaken staff by me yet unobserved—  
 A staff which must have dropped from his  
 slack hand

And lay till now neglected in the grass.  
 Though weak his step and cautious, he  
 appeared

To travel without pain, and I beheld,  
 With an astonishment but ill suppressed,  
 His ghostly figure moving at my side ;  
 Nor could I, while we journeyed thus, for-  
 bear

To turn from present hardships to the past,  
 And speak of war, battle, and pestilence,  
 Sprinkling this talk with questions, better  
 spared,

On what he might himself have seen or felt.  
 He all the while was in demeanour calm,  
 Concise in answer ; solemn and sublime  
 He might have seemed, but that in all he  
 said

There was a strange half-absence, as of one  
 Knowing too well the importance of his  
 theme,

But feeling it no longer. Our discourse  
 Soon ended, and together on we passed  
 In silence through a wood gloomy and still.  
 Up-turning, then, along an open field,

We reached a cottage. At the door I  
knocked,  
And earnestly to charitable care  
Commended him as a poor friendless man,  
Belated and by sickness overcome.  
Assured that now the traveller would repose  
In comfort, I entreated that henceforth  
He would not linger in the public ways,  
But ask for timely furtherance and help  
Such as his state required. At this reproof,  
With the same ghastly mildness in his look,  
He said, "My trust is in the God of  
Heaven,  
And in the eye of him who passes me!"

The cottage door was speedily unbarred,  
And now the soldier touched his hat once  
more  
With his lean hand, and in a faltering  
voice,  
Whose tone bespoke reviving interests  
Till then unfelt, he thanked me; I returned  
The farewell blessing of the patient man,  
And so we parted. Back I cast a look,  
And lingered near the door a little space,  
Then sought with quiet heart my distant  
home.

## BOOK FIFTH

## BOOKS

WHEN Contemplation, like the night-calm  
felt  
Through earth and sky, spreads widely,  
and sends deep  
Into the soul its tranquillising power,  
Even then I sometimes grieve for thee, O  
Man,  
Earth's paramount Creature! not so much  
for woes  
That thou endurest; heavy though that  
weight be,  
Cloud-like it mounts, or touched with light  
divine  
Doth melt away; but for those palms  
achieved  
Through length of time, by patient exercise  
Of study and hard thought; there, there,  
it is  
That sadness finds its fuel. Hitherto,  
In progress through this Verse, my mind  
hath looked  
Upon the speaking face of earth and heaven

As her prime teacher, intercourse with man  
Established by the sovereign Intellect,  
Who through that bodily image hath dif-  
fused,

As might appear to the eye of fleeting time,  
A deathless spirit. Thou also, man! hast  
wrought,

For commerce of thy nature with herself,  
Things that aspire to unconquerable life;  
And yet we feel—we cannot choose but  
feel—

That they must perish. Tremblings of the  
heart

It gives, to think that our immortal being  
No more shall need such garments; and  
yet man,

As long as he shall be the child of earth,  
Might almost "weep to have" what he  
may lose,

Nor be himself extinguished, but survive,  
Abject, depressed, forlorn, disconsolate.  
A thought is with me sometimes, and I  
say,—

Should the whole frame of earth by inward  
throes

Be wrenched, or fire come down from far  
to scorch

Her pleasant habitations, and dry up  
Old Ocean, in his bed left singed and bare,  
Yet would the living Presence still subsist  
Victorious, and composure would ensue,  
And kindlings like the morning—presage  
sure

Of day returning and of life revived.  
But all the meditations of mankind,  
Yea, all the adamantine holds of truth  
By reason built, or passion, which itself  
Is highest reason in a soul sublime;  
The consecrated works of Bard and Sage,  
Sensuous or intellectual, wrought by men,  
Twin labourers and heirs of the same hopes;  
Where would they be? Oh! why hath not  
the Mind

Some element to stamp her image on  
In nature somewhat nearer to her own?  
Why, gifted with such powers to send  
abroad

Her spirit, must it lodge in shrines so frail?

One day, when from my lips a like  
complaint

Had fallen in presence of a studious friend,  
He with a smile made answer, that in truth  
'Twas going far to seek disquietude;

But on the front of his reproof confessed  
That he himself had oftentimes given way  
To kindred hauntings. Whereupon I told,  
That once in the stillness of a summer's  
noon,

While I was seated in a rocky cave  
By the sea-side, perusing, so it chanced,  
The famous history of the errant knight  
Recorded by Cervantes, these same thoughts  
Beset me, and to height unusual rose,  
While listlessly I sate, and, having closed  
The book, had turned my eyes toward the  
wide sea.

On poetry and geometric truth,  
And their high privilege of lasting life,  
From all internal injury exempt,  
I mused ; upon these chiefly : and at length,  
My senses yielding to the sultry air,  
Sleep seized me, and I passed into a dream.  
I saw before me stretched a boundless plain  
Of sandy wilderness, all black and void,  
And as I looked around, distress and fear  
Came creeping over me, when at my side,  
Close at my side, an uncouth shape ap-  
peared

Upon a dromedary, mounted high.  
He seemed an Arab of the Bedouin tribes :  
A lance he bore, and underneath one arm  
A stone, and in the opposite hand a shell  
Of a surpassing brightness. At the sight  
Much I rejoiced, not doubting but a guide  
Was present, one who with unerring skill  
Would through the desert lead me ; and  
while yet

I looked and looked, self-questioned what  
this freight

Which the new-comer carried through the  
waste

Could mean, the Arab told me that the  
stone

(To give it in the language of the dream)  
Was "Euclid's Elements," and "This,"  
said he,

"Is something of more worth ;" and at  
the word

Stretched forth the shell, so beautiful in  
shape,

In colour so resplendent, with command  
That I should hold it to my ear. I did so,  
And heard that instant in an unknown  
tongue,

Which yet I understood, articulate sounds,  
A loud prophetic blast of harmony ;

An Ode, in passion uttered, which foretold

Destruction to the children of the earth  
By deluge, now at hand. No sooner ceased  
The song, than the Arab with calm look  
declared

That all would come to pass of which the  
voice

Had given forewarning, and that he himself  
Was going then to bury those two books :

The one that held acquaintance with the  
stars,

And wedded soul to soul in purest bond  
Of reason, undisturbed by space or time ;

The other that was a god, yea many gods,  
Had voices more than all the winds, with  
power

To exhilarate the spirit, and to soothe,  
Through every clime, the heart of human  
kind.

While this was uttering, strange as it may  
seem,

I wondered not, although I plainly saw  
The one to be a stone, the other a shell ;  
Nor doubted once but that they both were  
books,

Having a perfect faith in all that passed.  
Far stronger, now, grew the desire I felt  
To cleave unto this man ; but when I prayed  
To share his enterprise, he hurried on  
Reckless of me : I followed, not unseen,  
For oftentimes he cast a backward look,  
Grasping his twofold treasure.—Lance in  
rest,

He rode, I keeping pace with him ; and  
now

He, to my fancy, had become the knight  
Whose tale Cervantes tells ; yet not the  
knight,

But was an Arab of the desert too ;  
Of these was neither, and was both at once.  
His countenance, meanwhile, grew more  
disturbed ;

And, looking backwards when he looked,  
mine eyes

Saw, over half the wilderness diffused,  
A bed of glittering light : I asked the cause :

"It is," said he, "the waters of the deep  
Gathering upon us ;" quickening then the  
pace

Of the unwieldy creature he bestrode,  
He left me : I called after him aloud ;  
He heeded not ; but, with his twofold  
charge

Still in his grasp, before me, full in view,  
Went hurrying o'er the illimitable waste,

With the fleet waters of a drowning world  
In chase of him ; whereat I waked in terror,  
And saw the sea before me, and the book,  
In which I had been reading, at my side.

Full often, taking from the world of sleep  
This Arab phantom, which I thus beheld,  
This semi-Quixote, I to him have given  
A substance, fancied him a living man,  
A gentle dweller in the desert, crazed  
By love and feeling, and internal thought  
Protracted among endless solitudes ;  
Have shaped him wandering upon this  
quest !

Nor have I pitied him ; but rather felt  
Reverence was due to a being thus em-  
ployed ;

And thought that, in the blind and awful  
lair

Of such a madness, reason did lie couched.  
Enow there are on earth to take in charge  
Their wives, their children, and their virgin  
loves,

Or whatsoever else the heart holds dear ;  
Enow to stir for these ; yea, will I say,  
Contemplating in soberness the approach  
Of an event so dire, by signs in earth  
Or heaven made manifest, that I could share  
That maniac's fond anxiety, and go  
Upon like errand. Oftentimes at least  
Me hath such strong entrancement over-  
come,

When I have held a volume in my hand,  
Poor earthly casket of immortal verse,  
Shakespeare, or Milton, labourers divine !

Great and benign, indeed, must be the  
power

Of living nature, which could thus so long  
Detain me from the best of other guides  
And dearest helpers, left unthanked, un-  
praised,

Even in the time of lisping infancy ;  
And later down, in prattling childhood even,  
While I was travelling back among those  
days,

How could I ever play an ingrate's part ?  
Once more should I have made those bowers  
resound,

By intermingling strains of thankfulness  
With their own thoughtless melodies ; at  
least

It might have well beseeemed me to repeat  
Some simply fashioned tale, to tell again,

In slender accents of sweet verse, some tale  
That did bewitch me then, and soothes me  
now.

O Friend ! O Poet ! brother of my soul,  
Think not that I could pass along untouched  
By these remembrances. Yet wherefore  
speak ?

Why call upon a few weak words to say  
What is already written in the hearts  
Of all that breathe?—what in the path of all  
Drops daily from the tongue of every child,  
Wherever man is found ? The trickling tear  
Upon the cheek of listening Infancy  
Proclaims it, and the insuperable look  
That drinks as if it never could be full.

That portion of my story I shall leave  
There registered : whatever else of power  
Or pleasure sown, or fostered thus, may be  
Peculiar to myself, let that remain  
Where still it works, though hidden from  
all search

Among the depths of time. Yet is it just  
That here, in memory of all books which lay  
Their sure foundations in the heart of man,  
Whether by native prose, or numerous verse,  
That in the name of all inspired souls—  
From Homer the great Thunderer, from the  
voice

That roars along the bed of Jewish song,  
And that more varied and elaborate,  
Those trumpet-tones of harmony that shake  
Our shores in England,—from those loftiest  
notes

Down to the low and wren-like warblings,  
made

For cottagers and spinners at the wheel,  
And sun-burnt travellers resting their tired  
limbs,

Stretched under wayside hedge-rows, ballad  
tunes,

Food for the hungry ears of little ones,  
And of old men who have survived their  
joys—

'Tis just that in behalf of these, the works,  
And of the men that framed them, whether  
known

Or sleeping nameless in their scattered  
graves,

That I should here assert their rights, attest  
Their honours, and should, once for all,  
pronounce

Their benediction ; speak of them as Powers  
For ever to be hallowed ; only less,

For what we are and what we may become,  
Than Nature's self; which is the breath of  
God,  
Or His pure Word by miracle revealed.

Rarely and with reluctance would I stoop  
To transitory themes; yet I rejoice,  
And, by these thoughts admonished, will  
pour out

Thanks with uplifted heart, that I was  
reared

Safe from an evil which these days have  
laid

Upon the children of the land, a pest  
That might have dried me up, body and  
soul.

This verse is dedicate to Nature's self,  
And things that teach as Nature teaches:  
then,

Oh! where had been the Man, the Poet  
where,

Where had we been, we two, beloved  
Friend!

If in the season of unperilous choice,  
In lieu of wandering, as we did, through  
vales

Rich with indigenous produce, open ground  
Of Fancy, happy pastures ranged at will,  
We had been followed, hourly watched,  
and noosed,

Each in his several melancholy walk  
Stringed like a poor man's heifer at its feed,  
Led through the lanes in forlorn servitude;  
Or rather like a stallèd ox debarred  
From touch of growing grass, that may  
not taste

A flower till it have yielded up its sweets  
A prelibation to the mower's scythe.

Behold the parent hen amid her brood,  
Though fledged and feathered, and well  
pleased to part

And straggle from her presence, still a  
brood,

And she herself from the maternal bond  
Still undischarged; yet doth she little more  
Than move with them in tenderness and  
love,

A centre to the circle which they make;  
And now and then, alike from need of  
theirs

And call of her own natural appetites,  
She scratches, ransacks up the earth for  
food,

Which they partake at pleasure. Early died  
My honoured Mother, she who was the  
heart

And hings of all our learnings and our  
loves:

She left us destitute, and, as we might,  
Trooping together. Little suits it me  
To break upon the sabbath of her rest  
With any thought that looks at others'  
blame;

Nor would I praise her but in perfect love.  
Hence am I checked: but let me boldly  
say,

In gratitude, and for the sake of truth,  
Unheard by her, that she, not falsely  
taught,

Fetching her goodness rather from times  
past,

Than shaping novelties for times to come,  
Had no presumption, no such jealousy,  
Nor did by habit of her thoughts mistrust  
Our nature, but had virtual faith that He  
Who fills the mother's breast with innocent  
milk,

Doth also for our nobler part provide,  
Under His great correction and control,  
As innocent instincts, and as innocent  
food;

Or draws, for minds that are left free to  
trust

In the simplicities of opening life,  
Sweet honey out of spured or dreaded  
weeds.

This was her creed, and therefore she was  
pure

From anxious fear of error or mishap,  
And evil, overweeningly so called;  
Was not puffed up by false unnatural  
hopes,

Nor selfish with unnecessary cares,  
Nor with impatience from the season asked  
More than its timely produce; rather loved  
The hours for what they are, than from  
regard

Glanced on their promises in restless pride.  
Such was she—not from faculties more  
strong

Than others have, but from the times,  
perhaps,  
And spot in which she lived, and through  
a grace

Of modest meekness, simple-mindedness,  
A heart that found benignity and hope,  
Being itself benign.

My drift I fear  
Is scarcely obvious; but, that common  
sense

May try this modern system by its fruits,  
Leave let me take to place before her sight  
A specimen pourtrayed with faithful hand.  
Full early trained to worship seemliness,  
This model of a child is never known  
To mix in quarrels; that were far beneath  
Its dignity; with gifts he bubbles o'er  
As generous as a fountain; selfishness  
May not come near him, nor the little  
throng

Of fitting pleasures tempt him from his  
path;

The wandering beggars propagate his  
name,

Dumb creatures find him tender as a nun,  
And natural or supernatural fear,  
Unless it leap upon him in a dream,  
Touches him not. To enhance the  
wonder, see

How arch his notices, how nice his sense  
Of the ridiculous; not blind is he  
To the broad follies of the licensed world,  
Yet innocent himself withal, though shrewd,  
And can read lectures upon innocence;  
A miracle of scientific lore,  
Ships he can guide across the pathless  
sea,

And tell you all their cunning; he can read  
The inside of the earth, and spell the stars;  
He knows the policies of foreign lands;  
Can string you names of districts, cities,  
towns,

The whole world over, tight as beads of  
dew

Upon a gossamer thread; he sifts, he  
weighs;

All things are put to question; he must  
live

Knowing that he grows wiser every day  
Or else not live at all, and seeing too  
Each little drop of wisdom as it falls  
Into the dimpling cistern of his heart:  
For this unnatural growth the trainer  
blame,

Pity the tree.—Poor human vanity,  
Wert thou extinguished, little would be  
left

Which he could truly love; but how  
escape?

For, ever as a thought of purer birth  
Rises to lead him toward a better clime,

Some intermeddler still is on the watch  
To drive him back, and pound him, like a  
stray,

Within the pinfold of his own conceit.  
Meanwhile old grandame earth is grieved  
to find

The playthings, which her love designed  
for him,

Unthought of: in their woodland beds the  
flowers

Weep, and the river sides are all forlorn.

Oh! give us once again the wishing-cap

Of Fortunatus, and the invisible coat

Of Jack the Giant-killer, Robin Hood,

And Sabra in the forest with St. George!

The child, whose love is here, at least, doth  
reap

One precious gain, that he forgets himself.

These mighty workmen of our later age,  
Who, with a broad highway, have over-  
bridged

The froward chaos of futurity,

Tamed to their bidding; they who have  
the skill

To manage books, and things, and make  
them act

On infant minds as surely as the sun

Deals with a flower; the keepers of our  
time,

The guides and wardens of our faculties,  
Sages who in their prescience would control  
All accidents, and to the very road

Which they have fashioned would confine  
us down,

Like engines; when will their presumption  
learn,

That in the unreasoning progress of the  
world

A wiser spirit is at work for us,

A better eye than theirs, most prodigal

Of blessings, and most studious of our  
good,

Even in what seem our most unfruitful  
hours?

<sup>1</sup> There was a Boy: ye knew him well,  
ye cliffs

And islands of Winander!—many a time  
At evening, when the earliest stars began  
To move along the edges of the hills,  
Rising or setting, would he stand alone  
Beneath the trees or by the glimmering lake,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 113.



And there, with fingers interwoven, both  
 hands  
 Pressed closely palm to palm, and to his  
 mouth  
 Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,  
 That they might answer him; and they  
 would shout  
 Across the watery vale, and shout again,  
 Responsive to his call, with quivering peals,  
 And long halloos and screams, and echoes  
 loud,  
 Redoubled and redoubled, concourse wild  
 Of jocund din; and, when a lengthened  
 pause  
 Of silence came and baffled his best skill,  
 Then sometimes, in that silence while he  
 hung  
 Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
 Has carried far into his heart the voice  
 Of mountain torrents; or the visible scene  
 Would enter unawares into his mind,  
 With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
 Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, re-  
 ceived  
 Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This Boy was taken from his mates, and  
 died  
 In childhood, ere he was full twelve years  
 old.  
 Fair is the spot, most beautiful the vale  
 Where he was born; the grassy church-  
 yard hangs  
 Upon a slope above the village school,  
 And through that churchyard when my  
 way has led  
 On summer evenings, I believe that there  
 A long half hour together I have stood  
 Mute, looking at the grave in which he  
 lies!  
 Even now appears before the mind's clear  
 eye  
 That self-same village church; I see her  
 sit  
 (The thronéd Lady whom erewhile we  
 hailed)  
 On her green hill, forgetful of this Boy  
 Who slumbers at her feet,—forgetful, too,  
 Of all her silent neighbourhood of graves,  
 And listening only to the gladsome sounds  
 That, from the rural school ascending, play  
 Beneath her and about her. May she long  
 Behold a race of young ones like to those

With whom I herded!—(easily, indeed,  
 We might have fed upon a fatter soil  
 Of arts and letters—but be that forgiven)—  
 A race of real children; not too wise,  
 Too learned, or too good; but wanton,  
 fresh,  
 And bandied up and down by love and hate;  
 Not unresentful where self-justified;  
 Fierce, moody, patient, venturous, modest,  
 shy;  
 Mad at their sports like withered leaves in  
 winds;  
 Though doing wrong and suffering, and  
 full oft  
 Bending beneath our life's mysterious weight  
 Of pain, and doubt, and fear, yet yielding  
 not  
 In happiness to the happiest upon earth.  
 Simplicity in habit, truth in speech,  
 Be these the daily strengtheners of their  
 minds;  
 May books and Nature be their early joy!  
 And knowledge, rightly honoured with that  
 name—  
 Knowledge not purchased by the loss of  
 power!

Well do I call to mind the very week  
 When I was first intrusted to the care  
 Of that sweet Valley; when its paths, its  
 shores,  
 And brooks were like a dream of novelty  
 To my half-infant thoughts; that very  
 week,  
 While I was roving up and down alone,  
 Seeking I knew not what, I chanced to cross  
 One of those open fields, which, shaped  
 like ears,  
 Make green peninsulas on Esthwaite's Lake:  
 Twilight was coming on, yet through the  
 gloom  
 Appeared distinctly on the opposite shore  
 A heap of garments, as if left by one  
 Who might have there been bathing. Long  
 I watched,  
 But no one owned them; meanwhile the  
 calm lake  
 Grew dark with all the shadows on its breast,  
 And, now and then, a fish up-leaping  
 snapped  
 The breathless stillness. The succeeding  
 day,  
 Those unclaimed garments telling a plain  
 tale

Drew to the spot an anxious crowd; some  
looked

In passive expectation from the shore,  
While from a boat others hung o'er the  
deep,  
Sounding with grappling irons and long  
poles.

At last, the dead man, 'mid that beauteous  
scene

Of trees and hills and water, bolt upright  
Rose, with his ghastly face, a spectre shape  
Of terror; yet no soul-debasing fear,  
Young as I was, a child not nine years old,  
Possessed me, for my inner eye had seen  
Such sights before, among the shining  
streams

Of faëry land, the forest of romance.  
Their spirit hallowed the sad spectacle  
With decoration of ideal grace;  
A dignity, a smoothness, like the works  
Of Grecian art, and purest poesy.

A precious treasure had I long possessed,  
A little yellow, canvas-covered book,  
A slender abstract of the Arabian tales;  
And, from companions in a new abode,  
When first I learnt, that this dear prize of  
mine

Was but a block hewn from a mighty  
quarry—  
That there were four large volumes, laden  
all

With kindred matter, 'twas to me, in truth,  
A promise scarcely earthly. Instantly,  
With one not richer than myself, I made  
A covenant that each should lay aside  
The moneys he possessed, and hoard up  
more,

Till our joint savings had amassed enough  
To make this book our own. Through  
several months,

In spite of all temptation, we preserved  
Religiously that vow; but firmness failed,  
Nor were we ever masters of our wish.

And when thereafter to my father's house  
The holidays returned me, there to find  
That golden store of books which I had  
left,

What joy was mine! How often in the  
course

Of those glad respites, though a soft west  
wind

Ruffled the waters to the angler's wish,

For a whole day together, have I lain  
Down by thy side, O Derwent! murmuring  
stream,

On the hot stones, and in the glaring sun,  
And there have read, devouring as I read,  
Defrauding the day's glory, desperate!  
Till with a sudden bound of smart reproach,  
Such as an idler deals with in his shame,  
I to the sport betook myself again.

A gracious spirit o'er this earth presides,  
And o'er the heart of man; invisibly  
It comes, to works of unreprieved delight,  
And tendency benign, directing those  
Who care not, know not, think not, what  
they do.

The tales that charm away the wakeful night  
In Araby, romances; legends penned  
For solace by dim light of monkish lamps;  
Fictions, for ladies of their love, devised  
By youthful squires; adventures endless,  
spun

By the dismantled warrior in old age,  
Out of the bowels of those very schemes  
In which his youth did first extravagance;  
These spread like day, and something in  
the shape

Of these will live till man shall be no more.  
Dumb yearnings, hidden appetites, are ours,  
And *they must* have their food. Our child-  
hood sits,

Our simple childhood, sits upon a throne  
That hath more power than all the elements.  
I guess not what this tells of Being past,  
Nor what it augurs of the life to come;  
But so it is; and, in that dubious hour—  
That twilight—when we first begin to see  
This dawning earth, to recognise, expect,  
And, in the long probation that ensues,  
The time of trial, ere we learn to live  
In reconciliation with our stinted powers;  
To endure this state of meagre vassalage,  
Unwilling to forego, confess, submit,  
Uneasy and unsettled, yoke-fellows  
To custom, mettlesome, and not yet tamed  
And humbled down—oh! then we feel, we  
feel,

We know where we have friends. Ye  
dreamers, then,

Forgers of daring tales! we bless you then,  
Impostors, drivellers, dotards, as the ape  
Philosophy will call you: *then* we feel  
With what, and how great might ye are in  
league,

Who make our wish, our power, our thought  
 a deed,  
 An empire, a possession,—ye whom time  
 And seasons serve; all Faculties to whom  
 Earth crouches, the elements are potter's  
 clay,  
 Space like a heaven filled up with northern  
 lights,  
 Here, nowhere, there, and everywhere at  
 once.

Relinquishing this lofty eminence  
 For ground, though humbler, not the less a  
 tract

Of the same isthmus, which our spirits cross  
 In progress from their native continent  
 To earth and human life, the Song might  
 dwell

On that delightful time of growing youth,  
 When craving for the marvellous gives way  
 To strengthening love for things that we  
 have seen;

When sober truth and steady sympathies,  
 Offered to notice by less daring pens,  
 Take firmer hold of us, and words them-  
 selves

Move us with conscious pleasure.

I am sad

At thought of rapture now for ever flown;  
 Almost to tears I sometimes could be sad  
 To think of, to read over, many a page,  
 Poems withal of name, which at that time  
 Did never fail to entrance me, and are now  
 Dead in my eyes, dead as a theatre  
 Fresh emptied of spectators. Twice five  
 years

Or less I might have seen, when first my  
 mind

With conscious pleasure opened to the  
 charm

Of words in tuneful order, found them sweet  
 For their own *sakes*, a passion, and a power;  
 And phrases pleased me chosen for delight,  
 For pomp, or love. Oft, in the public roads  
 Yet unfrequented, while the morning light  
 Was yellowing the hill tops, I went abroad  
 With a dear friend, and for the better part  
 Of two delightful hours we strolled along  
 By the still borders of the misty lake,  
 Repeating favourite verses with one voice,  
 Or conning more, as happy as the birds  
 That round us chaunted. Well might we  
 be glad,

Lifted above the ground by airy fancies,

More bright than madness or the dreams  
 of wine;

And, though full oft the objects of our love  
 Were false, and in their splendour over-  
 wrought,

Yet was there surely then no vulgar power  
 Working within us,—nothing less, in truth,  
 Than that most noble attribute of man,  
 Though yet untutored and inordinate,  
 That wish for something loftier, more  
 adorned,

Than is the common aspect, daily garb,  
 Of human life. What wonder, then, if  
 sounds

Of exultation echoed through the groves!  
 For, images, and sentiments, and words,  
 And everything encountered or pursued  
 In that delicious world of poesy,  
 Kept holiday, a never-ending show,  
 With music, incense, festival, and flowers!

Here must we pause: this only let me  
 add,

From heart-experience, and in humblest  
 sense

Of modesty, that he, who in his youth  
 A daily wanderer among woods and fields  
 With living Nature hath been intimate,  
 Not only in that raw unpractised time  
 Is stirred to ecstasy, as others are,  
 By glittering verse; but further, doth receive,  
 In measure only dealt out to himself,  
 Knowledge and increase of enduring joy  
 From the great Nature that exists in works  
 Of mighty Poets. Visionary power  
 Attends the motions of the viewless winds,  
 Embodied in the mystery of words:  
 There, darkness makes abode, and all the  
 host

Of shadowy things work endless changes,—  
 there,

As in a mansion like their proper home,  
 Even forms and substances are circumfused  
 By that transparent veil with light divine,  
 And, through the turnings intricate of verse,  
 Present themselves as objects recognised,  
 In flashes, and with glory not their own.

## BOOK SIXTH

### CAMBRIDGE AND THE ALPS

THE leaves were fading when to Esthwaite's  
 banks

And the simplicities of cottage life  
I bade farewell ; and, one among the youth  
Who, summoned by that season, reunite  
As scattered birds troop to the fowler's lure,  
Went back to Granta's cloisters, not so  
prompt

Or eager, though as gay and undepressed  
In mind, as when I thence had taken flight  
A few short months before. I turned my  
face

Without repining from the coves and  
heights

Clothed in the sunshine of the withering  
fern ;

Quitted, not loth, the mild magnificence  
Of calmer lakes and louder streams ; and  
you,

Frank-hearted maids of rocky Cumber-  
land,

You and your not unwelcome days of mirth,  
Relinquished, and your nights of revelry,  
And in my own unlovely cell sate down  
In lightsome mood—such privilege has  
youth

That cannot take long leave of pleasant  
thoughts.

The bonds of indolent society  
Relaxing in their hold, henceforth I lived  
More to myself. Two winters may be  
passed

Without a separate notice : many books  
Were skimmed, devoured, or studiously  
perused,

But with no settled plan. I was detached  
Internally from academic cares ;  
Yet independent study seemed a course  
Of hardly disobedience toward friends  
And kindred, proud rebellion and unkind.  
This spurious virtue, rather let it bear  
A name it now deserves, this cowardice,  
Gave treacherous sanction to that over-love  
Of freedom which encouraged me to turn  
From regulations even of my own  
As from restraints and bonds. Yet who  
can tell—

Who knows what thus may have been  
gained, both then

And at a later season, or preserved ;  
What love of nature, what original strength  
Of contemplation, what intuitive truths  
The deepest and the best, what keen re-  
search,

Unbiased, unbewildered, and unawed ?

The Poet's soul was with me at that  
time ;

Sweet meditations, the still overflow  
Of present happiness, while future years  
Lacked not anticipations, tender dreams,  
No few of which have since been realised ;  
And some remain, hopes for my future life.  
Four years and thirty, told this very week,  
Have I been now a sojourner on earth,  
By sorrow not unsmitten ; yet for me  
Life's morning radiance hath not left the  
hills,

Her dew is on the flowers. Those were  
the days

Which also first emboldened me to trust  
With firmness, hitherto but slightly touched  
By such a daring thought, that I might  
leave

Some monument behind me which pure  
hearts

Should reverence. The instinctive humble-  
ness,

Maintained even by the very name and  
thought

Of printed books and authorship, began  
To melt away ; and further, the dread awe  
Of mighty names was softened down and  
seemed

Approachable, admitting fellowship  
Of modest sympathy. Such aspect now,  
Though not familiarly, my mind put on,  
Content to observe, to achieve, and to enjoy.

All winter long, whenever free to choose,  
Did I by night frequent the College grove  
And tributary walks ; the last, and oft  
The only one, who had been lingering  
there

Through hours of silence, till the porter's  
bell,

A punctual follower on the stroke of nine,  
Rang with its blunt unceremonious voice ;  
Inexorable summons ! Lofty elms,  
Inviting shades of opportune recess,  
Bestowed composure on a neighbourhood  
Unpeaceful in itself. A single tree  
With sinuous trunk, boughs exquisitely  
wreathed,

Grew there ; an ash which Winter for him-  
self

Decked out with pride, and with outlandish  
grace :

Up from the ground, and almost to the  
top,

The trunk and every master branch were  
green

With clustering ivy, and the lightsome twigs  
And outer spray profusely tipped with seeds  
That hung in yellow tassels, while the air  
Stirred them, not voiceless. Often have I  
stood

Foot-bound uplooking at this lovely tree  
Beneath a frosty moon. The hemisphere  
Of magic fiction, verse of mine perchance  
May never tread; but scarcely Spenser's  
self

Could have more tranquil visions in his  
youth,

Or could more bright appearances create  
Of human forms with superhuman powers,  
Than I beheld, loitering on calm clear  
nights

Alone, beneath this fairy work of earth.

On the vague reading of a truant youth  
'Twere idle to descant. My inner judg-  
ment

Not seldom differed from my taste in books,  
As if it appertained to another mind,  
And yet the books which then I valued most  
Are dearest to me *now*; for, having scanned,  
Not heedlessly, the laws, and watched the  
forms

Of Nature, in that knowledge I possessed  
A standard, often usefully applied,  
Even when unconsciously, to things re-  
moved

From a familiar sympathy.—In fine,  
I was a better judge of thoughts than words,  
Misled in estimating words, not only  
By common inexperience of youth,  
But by the trade in classic niceties,  
The dangerous craft, of culling term and  
phrase

From languages that want the living voice  
To carry meaning to the natural heart;  
To tell us what is passion, what is truth,  
What reason, what simplicity and sense.

Yet may we not entirely overlook  
The pleasure gathered from the rudiments  
Of geometric science. Though advanced  
In these enquiries, with regret I speak,  
No farther than the threshold, there I found  
Both elevation and composed delight:  
With Indian awe and wonder, ignorance  
pleased

With its own struggles, did I meditate

On the relation those abstractions bear  
To Nature's laws, and by what process  
led,

Those immaterial agents bowed their heads  
Duly to serve the mind of earth-born man;  
From star to star, from kindred sphere to  
sphere,

From system on to system without end.

More frequently from the same source I  
drew

A pleasure quiet and profound, a sense  
Of permanent and universal sway,  
And paramount belief; there, recognised  
A type, for finite natures, of the one  
Supreme Existence, the surpassing life  
Which—to the boundaries of space and  
time,

Of melancholy space and doleful time,  
Superior and incapable of change,  
Nor touched by welterings of passion—is,  
And hath the name of, God. Transcendent  
peace

And silence did await upon these thoughts  
That were a frequent comfort to my youth.

'Tis told by one whom stormy waters  
threw,

With fellow-sufferers by the shipwreck  
spared,

Upon a desert coast, that having brought  
To land a single volume, saved by chance,  
A treatise of Geometry, he wont,  
Although of food and clothing destitute,  
And beyond common wretchedness de-  
pressed,

To part from company and take this book  
(Then first a self-taught pupil in its truths)  
To spots remote, and draw his diagrams  
With a long staff upon the sand, and thus  
Did oft beguile his sorrow, and almost  
Forget his feeling: so (if like effect  
From the same cause produced, 'mid out-  
ward things

So different, may rightly be compared),  
So was it then with me, and so will be  
With Poets ever. Mighty is the charm  
Of those abstractions to a mind beset  
With images and haunted by herself,  
And specially delightful unto me  
Was that clear synthesis built up aloft  
So gracefully; even then when it appeared  
Not more than a mere plaything, or a toy  
To sense embodied; not the thing it is

In verity, an independent world,  
Created out of pure intelligence.

Such dispositions then were mine un-  
earned

By aught, I fear, of genuine desert—  
Mine, through heaven's grace and inborn  
aptitudes.

And not to leave the story of that time  
Imperfect, with these habits must be joined,  
Moods melancholy, fits of spleen, that loved  
A pensive sky, sad days, and piping winds,  
The twilight more than dawn, autumn than  
spring ;

A treasured and luxurious gloom of choice  
And inclination mainly, and the mere  
Redundancy of youth's contentedness.

—To time thus spent, add multitudes of  
hours

Pilfered away, by what the Bard who sang  
Of the Enchanter Indolence hath called  
"Good-natured lounging," and behold a  
map

Of my collegiate life—far less intense  
Than duty called for, or, without regard  
To duty, *might* have sprung up of itself  
By change of accidents, or even, to speak  
Without unkindness, in another place.

Yet why take refuge in that plea?—the  
fault,

This I repeat, was mine; mine be the  
blame.

In summer, making quest for works of  
art,

Or scenes renowned for beauty, I explored  
That streamlet whose blue current works  
its way

Between romantic Dovedale's spiry rocks;  
Pried into Yorkshire dales, or hidden tracts  
Of my own native region, and was blest  
Between these sundry wanderings with a joy  
Above all joys, that seemed another morn  
Risen on mid noon; blest with the presence,  
Friend

Of that sole Sister, her who hath been long  
Dear to thee also, thy true friend and mine,  
Now, after separation desolate,  
Restored to me—such absence that she  
seemed

A gift then first bestowed. The varied  
banks

Of Emont, hitherto unnamed in song,  
And that monastic castle, 'mid tall trees,

Low standing by the margin of the stream,  
A mansion visited (as fame reports)

By Sidney, where, in sight of our Helvellyn,  
Or stormy Cross-fell, snatches he might pen  
Of his Arcadia, by fraternal love

Inspired;—that river and those mouldering  
towers

Have seen us side by side, when, having  
clomb

The darksome windings of a broken stair,  
And crept along a ridge of fractured wall,  
Not without trembling, we in safety looked  
Forth, through some Gothic window's open  
space,

And gathered with one mind a rich reward  
From the far-stretching landscape, by the  
light

Of morning beautified, or purple eve;  
Or, not less pleased, lay on some turret's  
head,

Catching from tufts of grass and hare-bell  
flowers

Their faintest whisper to the passing breeze,  
Given out while mid-day heat oppressed  
the plains.

Another maid there was, who also shed  
A gladness o'er that season, then to me,  
By her exulting outside look of youth  
And placid under-countenance, first en-  
deared;

That other spirit, Coleridge! who is now  
So near to us, that meek confiding heart,  
So revered by us both. O'er paths and  
fields

In all that neighbourhood, through narrow  
lanes

Of eglantine, and through the shady woods,  
And o'er the Border Beacon, and the waste  
Of naked pools, and common crags that  
lay

Exposed on the bare fell, were scattered  
love,

The spirit of pleasure, and youth's golden  
gleam.

O Friend! we had not seen thee at that  
time,

And yet a power is on me, and a strong  
Confusion, and I seem to plant thee there.  
Far art thou wandered now in search of  
health

And milder breezes,—melancholy lot!  
But thou art with us, with us in the past,  
The present, with us in the times to come.

There is no grief, no sorrow, no despair,  
 No languor, no dejection, no dismay,  
 No absence scarcely can there be, for those  
 Who love as we do. Speed thee well !  
     divide  
 With us thy pleasure ; thy returning  
     strength,  
 Receive it daily as a joy of ours ;  
 Share with us thy fresh spirits, whether  
     gift  
 Of gales Etesian or of tender thoughts.

I, too, have been a wanderer ; but, alas !  
 How different the fate of different men.  
 Though mutually unknown, yea nursed and  
     reared  
 As if in several elements, we were framed  
 To bend at last to the same discipline,  
 Predestined, if two beings ever were,  
 To seek the same delights, and have one  
     health,  
 One happiness. Throughout this narrative,  
 Else sooner ended, I have borne in mind  
 For whom it registers the birth, and marks  
     the growth,  
 Of gentleness, simplicity, and truth,  
 And joyous loves, that hallow innocent  
     days  
 Of peace and self-command. Of rivers,  
     fields,  
 And groves I speak to thee, my Friend ! to  
     thee,  
 Who, yet a liveried schoolboy, in the depths  
 Of the huge city, on the leaded roof  
 Of that wide edifice, thy school and home,  
 Wert used to lie and gaze upon the clouds  
 Moving in heaven ; or, of that pleasure  
     tired,  
 To shut thine eyes, and by internal light  
 See trees, and meadows, and thy native  
     stream,  
 Far distant, thus beheld from year to year  
 Of a long exile. Nor could I forget,  
 In this late portion of my argument,  
 That scarcely, as my term of pupilage  
 Ceased, had I left those academic bowers  
 When thou wert thither guided. From the  
     heart  
 Of London, and from cloisters there, thou  
     camest,  
 And didst sit down in temperance and  
     peace,  
 A rigorous student. What a stormy course  
 Then followed. Oh ! it is a pang that calls

For utterance, to think what easy change  
 Of circumstances might to thee have spared  
 A world of pain, ripened a thousand hopes,  
 For ever withered. Through this retrospect  
 Of my collegiate life I still have had  
 Thy after-sojourn in the self-same place  
 Present before my eyes, have played with  
     times  
 And accidents as children do with cards,  
 Or as a man, who, when his house is built,  
 A frame locked up in wood and stone, doth  
     still,  
 As impotent fancy prompts, by his fireside,  
 Rebuild it to his liking. I have thought  
 Of thee, thy learning, gorgeous eloquence,  
 And all the strength and plumage of thy  
     youth,  
 Thy subtle speculations, toils abstruse  
 Among the schoolmen, and Platonic forms  
 Of wild ideal pageantry, shaped out  
 From things well-matched or ill, and words  
     for things,  
 The self-created sustenance of a mind  
 Debarred from Nature's living images,  
 Compelled to be a life unto herself,  
 And unrelentingly possessed by thirst  
 Of greatness, love, and beauty. Not alone,  
 Ah ! surely not in singleness of heart  
 Should I have seen the light of evening fade  
 From smooth Cam's silent waters : had we  
     met,  
 Even at that early time, needs must I trust  
 In the belief, that my maturer age,  
 My calmer habits, and more steady voice,  
 Would with an influence benign have  
     soothed,  
 Or chased away, the airy wretchedness  
 That battered on thy youth. But thou hast  
     trod  
 A march of glory, which doth put to shame  
 These vain regrets ; health suffers in thee,  
     else  
 Such grief for thee would be the weakest  
     thought  
 That ever harboured in the breast of man.

A passing word crewhile did lightly  
     touch  
 On wanderings of my own, that now  
     embraced  
 With livelier hope a region wider far.

When the third summer freed us from  
     restraint,

A youthful friend, he too a mountaineer,  
Not slow to share my wishes, took his staff,  
And sallying forth, we journeyed side by  
side,

Bound to the distant Alps. A hardy slight,  
Did this unprecedented course imply,  
Of college studies and their set rewards;  
Nor had, in truth, the scheme been formed  
by me

Without uneasy forethought of the pain,  
The censures, and ill-omening, of those  
To whom my worldly interests were dear.  
But Nature then was sovereign in my mind,  
And mighty forms, seizing a youthful fancy,  
Had given a charter to irregular hopes.

In any age of uneventful calm  
Among the nations, surely would my heart  
Have been possessed by similar desire;  
But Europe at that time was thrilled with  
joy,

France standing on the top of golden hours,  
And human nature seeming born again.

Lightly equipped, and but a few brief  
looks

Cast on the white cliffs of our native shore  
From the receding vessel's deck, we chanced  
To land at Calais on the very eve  
Of that great federal day; and there we  
saw,

In a mean city, and among a few,  
How bright a face is worn when joy of one  
Is joy for tens of millions. Southward  
thence

We held our way, direct through hamlets,  
towns,

Gaudy with reliques of that festival,  
Flowers left to wither on triumphal arcs,  
And window-garlands. On the public  
roads,

And, once, three days successively, through  
paths

By which our toilsome journey was abridged,  
Among sequestered villages we walked  
And found benevolence and blessedness  
Spread like a fragrance everywhere, when  
spring

Hath left no corner of the land untouched;  
Where elms for many and many a league  
in files

With their thin umbrage, on the stately  
roads

Of that great kingdom, rustled o'er our  
heads,

For ever near us as we paced along:

How sweet at such a time, with such delight  
On every side, in prime of youthful strength,  
To feed a Poet's tender melancholy  
And fond conceit of sadness, with the sound  
Of undulations varying as might please  
The wind that swayed them; once, and  
more than once,

Unhoused beneath the evening star we saw  
Dances of liberty, and, in late hours  
Of darkness, dances in the open air  
Deftly prolonged, though grey-haired  
lookers on

Might waste their breath in chiding.

Under hills—

The vine-clad hills and slopes of Burgundy,  
Upon the bosom of the gentle Saone  
We glided forward with the flowing stream.  
Swift Rhone! thou wert the *wings* on  
which we cut

A winding passage with majestic ease  
Between thy lofty rocks. Enchanting show  
Those woods and farms and orchards did  
present,

And single cottages and lurking towns,  
Reach after reach, succession without end  
Of deep and stately vales! A lonely pair  
Of strangers, till day closed, we sailed  
along

Clustered together with a merry crowd  
Of those emancipated, a blithe host  
Of travellers, chiefly delegates, returning  
From the great spousals newly solemnised  
At their chief city, in the sight of Heaven.  
Like bees they swarmed, gaudy and gay  
as bees;

Some vapoured in the unruliness of joy,  
And with their swords flourished as if to  
fight

The saucy air. In this proud company  
We landed—took with them our evening  
meal,

Guests welcome almost as the angels were  
To Abraham of old. The supper done,  
With flowing cups elate and happy thoughts  
We rose at signal given, and formed a ring  
And, hand in hand, danced round and  
round the board;

All hearts were open, every tongue was  
loud

With amity and glee; we bore a name  
Honoured in France, the name of English-  
men,

And hospitably did they give us hail,



As their forerunners in a glorious course;  
And round and round the board we danced  
again.

With these blithe friends our voyage we  
renewed

At early dawn. The monastery bells  
Made a sweet jingling in our youthful ears;  
The rapid river flowing without noise,  
And each uprising or receding spire  
Spake with a sense of peace, at intervals  
Touching the heart amid the boisterous crew  
By whom we were encompassed. Taking  
leave

Of this glad throng, foot-travellers side by  
side,

Measuring our steps in quiet, we pursued  
Our journey, and ere twice the sun had set  
Beheld the Convent of Chartreuse, and there

Rested within an awful *solitude*:  
Yes; for even then no other than a place  
Of soul-affecting *solitude* appeared  
That far-famed region, though our eyes  
had seen,

As toward the sacred mansion we advanced,  
Arms flashing, and a military glare  
Of riotous men commissioned to expel  
The blameless inmates, and belike subvert  
That frame of social being, which so long  
Had bodied forth the ghostliness of things  
In silence visible and perpetual calm.

—"Stay, stay your sacrilegious hands!"  
—The voice

Was Nature's, uttered from her Alpine  
throne;

I heard it then and seem to hear it now—  
"Your impious work forbear, perish what  
may,

Let this one temple last, be this one spot  
Of earth devoted to eternity!"

She ceased to speak, but while St. Bruno's  
pines

Waved their dark tops, not silent as they  
waved,

And while below, along their several beds,  
Murmured the sister streams of Life and  
Death,

Thus by conflicting passions pressed, my  
heart

Responded; "Honour to the patriot's zeal!  
Glory and hope to new-born Liberty!  
Hail to the mighty projects of the time!  
Discerning sword that Justice wields, do  
thou

Go forth and prosper; and, ye purging  
fires,

Up to the loftiest towers of Pride ascend,  
Fanned by the breath of angry Providence.  
But oh! if Past and Future be the wings  
On whose support harmoniously conjoined  
Moves the great spirit of human knowledge,  
spare

These courts of mystery, where a step  
advanced

Between the portals of the shadowy rocks  
Leaves far behind life's treacherous vanities,  
For penitential tears and trembling hopes  
Exchanged—to equalise in God's pure  
sight

Monarch and peasant: be the house  
redeemed

With its unworldly votaries, for the sake  
Of conquest over sense, hourly achieved  
Through faith and meditative reason,  
resting

Upon the word of heaven-imparted truth,  
Calmly triumphant; and for humbler claim  
Of that imaginative impulse sent  
From these majestic floods, yon shining  
cliffs,

The untransmuted shapes of many worlds,  
Cerulean ether's pure inhabitants,  
These forests unapproachable by death,  
That shall endure as long as man endures,  
To think, to hope, to worship, and to feel,  
To struggle, to be lost within himself  
In trepidation, from the blank abyss

To look with bodily eyes, and be consoled."  
Not seldom since that moment have I  
wished

That thou, O Friend! the trouble or the  
calm

Hadst shared, when, from profane regards  
apart,

In sympathetic reverence we trod  
The floors of those dim cloisters, till that  
hour,

From their foundation, strangers to the  
presence

Of unrestricted and unthinking man.  
Abroad, how cheeringly the sunshine lay  
Upon the open lawns! Vallombre's groves  
Entering, we fed the soul with darkness;  
thence

Issued, and with uplifted eyes beheld,  
In different quarters of the bending sky,  
The cross of Jesus stand erect, as if  
Hands of angelic powers had fixed it there,

Memorial revered by a thousand storms;  
Yet then, from the indiscriminating sweep  
And rage of one State-whirlwind, insecure.

'Tis not my present purpose to retrace  
That variegated journey step by step.  
A march it was of military speed,  
And Earth did change her images and forms

Before us, fast as clouds are changed in heaven.

Day after day, up early and down late,  
From hill to vale we dropped, from vale to hill

Mounted—from province on to province swept,

Keen hunters in a chase of fourteen weeks,  
Eager as birds of prey, or as a ship  
Upon the stretch, when winds are blowing fair:

Sweet coverts did we cross of pastoral life,  
Enticing valleys, greeted them and left  
Too soon, while yet the very flash and gleam

Of salutation were not passed away.  
Oh! sorrow for the youth who could have seen,

Unchastened, unsubdued, unawed, unraised

To patriarchal dignity of mind,  
And pure simplicity of wish and will,  
Those sanctified abodes of peaceful man,  
Pleased (though to hardship born, and compassed round

With danger, varying as the seasons change),

Pleased with his daily task, or, if not pleased,

Contented, from the moment that the dawn  
(Ah! surely not without attendant gleams  
Of soul-illumination) calls him forth  
To industry, by glistenings flung on rocks,  
Whose evening shadows lead him to repose.

Well might a stranger look with bounding heart

Down on a green recess, the first I saw  
Of those deep haunts, an aboriginal vale,  
Quiet and lorded over and possessed  
By naked huts, wood-built, and sown like tents

Or Indian cabins over the fresh lawns  
And by the river side.

That very day,

From a bare ridge we also first beheld  
Unveiled the summit of Mont Blanc, and grieved

To have a soulless image on the eye  
That had usurped upon a living thought  
That never more could be. The wondrous Vale

Of Chamouny stretched far below, and soon

With its dumb cataracts and streams of ice,  
A motionless array of mighty waves,  
Five rivers broad and vast, made rich amends,

And reconciled us to realities;  
There small birds warble from the leafy trees,

The eagle soars high in the element,  
There doth the reaper bind the yellow sheaf,

The maiden spread the haycock in the sun,  
While Winter like a well-tamed lion walks,  
Descending from the mountain to make sport

Among the cottages by beds of flowers.

Whate'er in this wide circuit we beheld,  
Or heard, was fitted to our unripe state  
Of intellect and heart. With such a book  
Before our eyes, we could not choose but read

Lessons of genuine brotherhood, the plain  
And universal reason of mankind,  
The truths of young and old. Nor, side by side

Pacing, two social pilgrims, or alone  
Each with his humour, could we fail to abound

In dreams and fictions, pensively composed:  
Dejection taken up for pleasure's sake,  
And gilded sympathies, the willow wreath,  
And sober posies of funeral flowers,  
Gathered among those solitudes sublime  
From formal gardens of the lady Sorrow,  
Did sweeten many a meditative hour.

Yet still in me with those soft luxuries  
Mixed something of stern mood, an under-thirst

Of vigour seldom utterly allayed:  
And from that source how different a sadness

Would issue, let one incident make known.  
When from the Vallais we had turned, and clomb

Along the Simplon's steep and rugged road,  
 Following a band of muleteers, we reached  
 A halting-place, where all together took  
 Their noon-tide meal. Hastily rose our  
 guide,  
 Leaving us at the board; awhile we  
 lingered,  
 Then paced the beaten downward way that  
 led  
 Right to a rough stream's edge, and there  
 broke off;  
 The only track now visible was one  
 That from the torrent's further brink held  
 forth  
 Conspicuous invitation to ascend  
 A lofty mountain. After brief delay  
 Crossing the unbridged stream, that road  
 we took,  
 And clomb with eagerness, till anxious  
 fears  
 Intruded, for we failed to overtake  
 Our comrades gone before. By fortunate  
 chance,  
 While every moment added doubt to  
 doubt,  
 A peasant met us, from whose mouth we  
 learned  
 That to the spot which had perplexed us  
 first  
 We must descend, and there should find  
 the road,  
 Which in the stony channel of the stream  
 Lay a few steps, and then along its banks;  
 And, that our future course, all plain to  
 sight,  
 Was downwards, with the current of that  
 stream.  
 Loth to believe what we so grieved to hear,  
 For still we had hopes that pointed to the  
 clouds,  
 We questioned him again, and yet again;  
 But every word that from the peasant's  
 lips  
 Came in reply, translated by our feelings,  
 Ended in this,—*that we had crossed the  
 Alps.*

Imagination—here the Power so called  
 Through sad incompetence of human  
 speech,  
 That awful Power rose from the mind's  
 abyss  
 Like an unfathered vapour that enwraps,

At once, some lonely traveller. I was  
 lost;  
 Halted without an effort to break through;  
 But to my conscious soul I now can say—  
 "I recognise thy glory:" in such strength  
 Of usurpation, when the light of sense  
 Goes out, but with a flash that has revealed  
 The invisible world, doth greatness make  
 abode,  
 There harbours; whether we be young or  
 old,  
 Our destiny, our being's heart and home,  
 Is with infinitude, and only there;  
 With hope it is, hope that can never die,  
 Effort, and expectation, and desire,  
 And something evermore about to be.  
 Under such banners militant, the soul  
 Seeks for no trophies, struggles for no  
 spoils  
 That may attest her prowess, blest in  
 thoughts  
 That are their own perfection and reward,  
 Strong in herself and in beatitude  
 That hides her, like the mighty flood of  
 Nile  
 Poured from his fount of Abyssinian clouds  
 To fertilise the whole Egyptian plain.

The melancholy slackening that ensued  
 Upon those tidings by the peasant given  
 Was soon dislodged. Downwards we  
 hurried fast,  
 And, with the half-shaped road which we  
 had missed,  
 Entered a narrow chasm. <sup>1</sup> The brook  
 and road  
 Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy strait,  
 And with them did we journey several  
 hours  
 At a slow pace. The immeasurable height  
 Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,  
 The stationary blasts of waterfalls,  
 And in the narrow rent at every turn  
 Winds thwarting winds, bewildered and  
 forlorn,  
 The torrents shooting from the clear blue  
 sky,  
 The rocks that muttered close upon our  
 ears,  
 Black drizzling crags that spake by the  
 way-side  
 As if a voice were in them, the sick sight  
 And giddy prospect of the raving stream,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 112.

The unfettered clouds and region of the  
Heavens,  
Tumult and peace, the darkness and the  
light—  
Were all like workings of one mind, the  
features  
Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree ;  
Characters of the great Apocalypse,  
The types and symbols of Eternity,  
Of first, and last, and midst, and without  
end.

That night our lodging was a house that  
stood  
Alone within the valley, at a point  
Where, tumbling from aloft, a torrent  
swelled  
The rapid stream whose margin we had  
trod ;  
A dreary mansion, large beyond all need,  
With high and spacious rooms, deafened  
and stunned  
By noise of waters, making innocent sleep  
Lie melancholy among weary bones.

Uprisen betimes, our journey we re-  
newed,  
Led by the stream, ere noon-day magnified  
Into a lordly river, broad and deep,  
Dimpling along in silent majesty,  
With mountains for its neighbours, and in  
view  
Of distant mountains and their snowy tops,  
And thus proceeding to Locarno's Lake,  
Fit resting-place for such a visitant.  
Locarno ! spreading out in width like  
Heaven,  
How dost thou cleave to the poetic heart,  
Bask in the sunshine of the memory ;  
And Como ! thou, a treasure whom the  
earth  
Keeps to herself, confined as in a depth  
Of Abyssinian privacy. I spake  
Of thee, thy chestnut woods, and garden  
plots  
Of Indian corn tended by dark-eyed maids ;  
Thy lofty steepes, and pathways roofed with  
vines,  
Winding from house to house, from town  
to town,  
Sole link that binds them to each other ;  
walks,  
League after league, and cloistral avenues,  
Where silence dwells if music be not there :

While yet a youth undisciplined in verse,  
Through fond ambition of that hour I  
strove  
To chant your praise ; nor can approach  
you now  
Ungreeted by a more melodious Song,  
Where tones of Nature smoothed by  
learned Art  
May flow in lasting current. Like a breeze  
Or sunbeam over your domain I passed  
In motion without pause ; but ye have left  
Your beauty with me, a serene accord  
Of forms and colours, passive, yet endowed  
In their submissiveness with power as sweet  
And gracious, almost, might I dare to say,  
As virtue is, or goodness ; sweet as love,  
Or the remembrance of a generous deed,  
Or mildest visitations of pure thought,  
When God, the giver of all joy, is thanked  
Religiously, in silent blessedness ;  
Sweet as this last herself, for such it is.

With those delightful pathways we ad-  
vanced,  
For two days' space, in presence of the  
Lake,  
That, stretching far among the Alps,  
assumed  
A character more stern. The second night,  
From sleep awakened, and misled by  
sound  
Of the church clock telling the hours with  
strokes  
Whose import then we had not learned, we  
rose  
By moonlight, doubting not that day was  
night,  
And that meanwhile, by no uncertain  
path,  
Along the winding margin of the lake,  
Led, as before, we should behold the scene  
Hushed in profound repose. We left the  
town  
Of Gravedona with this hope ; but soon  
Were lost, bewildered among woods im-  
mense,  
And on a rock sate down, to wait for day.  
An open place it was, and overlooked,  
From high, the sullen water far beneath,  
On which a dull red image of the moon  
Lay bedded, changing oftentimes its form  
Like an uneasy snake. From hour to hour  
We sate and sate, wondering, as if the  
night

Had been ensnared by witchcraft. On the  
 rock  
 At last we stretched our weary limbs for  
 sleep,  
 But *could not* sleep, tormented by the  
 stings  
 Of insects, which, with noise like that of  
 noon,  
 Filled all the woods: the cry of unknown  
 birds;  
 The mountains more by blackness visible  
 And their own size, than any outward  
 light;  
 The breathless wilderness of clouds; the  
 clock  
 That told, with unintelligible voice,  
 The widely parted hours; the noise of  
 streams,  
 And sometimes rustling motions nigh at  
 hand,  
 That did not leave us free from personal  
 fear;  
 And, lastly, the withdrawing moon, that  
 set  
 Before us, while she still was high in  
 heaven;—  
 These were our food; and such a summer's  
 night  
 Followed that pair of golden days that  
 shed  
 On Como's Lake, and all that round it lay,  
 Their fairest, softest, happiest influence.

But here I must break off, and bid fare-  
 well  
 To days, each offering some new sight, or  
 fraught  
 With some untried adventure, in a course  
 Prolonged till sprinklings of autumnal snow  
 Checked our unwearied steps. Let this  
 alone  
 Be mentioned as a parting word, that not  
 In hollow exultation, dealing out  
 Hyperboles of praise comparative,  
 Not rich one moment to be poor for ever;  
 Not prostrate, overborne, as if the mind  
 Herself were nothing, a mere pensioner  
 On outward forms—did we in presence  
 stand  
 Of that magnificent region. On the front  
 Of this whole Song is written that my heart  
 Must, in such Temple, needs have offered  
 up  
 A different worship. Finally, whate'er

I saw, or heard, or felt, was but a stream  
 That flowed into a kindred stream; a gale,  
 Confederate with the current of the soul,  
 To speed my voyage; every sound or sight,  
 In its degree of power, administered  
 To grandeur or to tenderness,—to the one  
 Directly, but to tender thoughts by means  
 Less often instantaneous in effect;  
 Led me to these by paths that, in the main,  
 Were more circuitous, but not less sure  
 Duly to reach the point marked out by  
 Heaven.

Oh, most beloved Friend! a glorious  
 time,  
 A happy time that was; triumphant looks  
 Were then the common language of all  
 eyes;  
 As if awaked from sleep, the Nations hailed  
 Their great expectancy: the life of war  
 Was then a spirit-stirring sound indeed,  
 A blackbird's whistle in a budding grove.  
 We left the Swiss exulting in the fate  
 Of their near neighbours; and, when short-  
 ening fast  
 Our pilgrimage, nor distant far from home,  
 We crossed the Brabant armies on the fret  
 For battle in the cause of Liberty.  
 A stripling, scarcely of the household then  
 Of social life, I looked upon these things  
 As from a distance; heard, and saw, and  
 felt,  
 Was touched, but with no intimate concern;  
 I seemed to move along them, as a bird  
 Moves through the air, or as a fish pursues  
 Its sport, or feeds in its proper element;  
 I wanted not that joy, I did not need  
 Such help; the ever-living universe,  
 Turn where I might, was opening out its  
 glories,  
 And the independent spirit of pure youth  
 Called forth, at every season, new delights,  
 Spread round my steps like sunshine o'er  
 green fields.

## BOOK SEVENTH

### RESIDENCE IN LONDON

SIX changeful years have vanished since I  
 first  
 Poured out (saluted by that quickening  
 breeze

Which met me issuing from the City's<sup>1</sup>  
walls)

A glad preamble to this Verse: I sang  
Aloud, with fervour irresistible  
Of short-lived transport, like a torrent  
bursting,

From a black thunder-cloud, down Scaffell's  
side

To rush and disappear. But soon broke  
forth

(So willed the Muse) a less impetuous  
stream,

That flowed awhile with unabating strength,  
Then stopped for years; not audible again  
Before last primrose-time. Beloved Friend!  
The assurance which then cheered some  
heavy thoughts

On thy departure to a foreign land  
Has failed; too slowly moves the promised  
work.

Through the whole summer have I been at  
rest,

Partly from voluntary holiday,  
And part through outward hindrance. But  
I heard,

After the hour of sunset yester-even,  
Sitting within doors between light and  
dark,

A choir of redbreasts gathered somewhere  
near

My threshold,—minstrels from the distant  
woods

Sent in on Winter's service, to announce,  
With preparation artful and benign,  
That the rough lord had left the surly  
North

On his accustomed journey. The delight,  
Due to this timely notice, unawares  
Smote me, and, listening, I in whispers  
said,

"Ye heartsome Choristers, ye and I will be  
Associates, and, unscared by blustering  
winds,

Will chant together." Thereafter, as the  
shades

Of twilight deepened, going forth, I spied  
A glow-worm underneath a dusky plume  
Or canopy of yet unwithered fern,  
Clear-shining, like a hermit's taper seen  
Through a thick forest. Silence touched  
me here

No less than sound had done before; the  
child

Of Summer, lingering, shining, by herself,  
The voiceless worm on the unfrequented  
hills,

Seemed sent on the same errand with the  
choir

Of Winter that had warbled at my door,  
And the whole year breathed tenderness  
and love.

The last night's genial feeling overflowed  
Upon this morning, and my favourite grove,  
Tossing in sunshine its dark boughs aloft,  
As if to make the strong wind visible,  
Wakes in me agitations like its own,  
A spirit friendly to the Poet's task,  
Which we will now resume with lively  
hope,

Nor checked by aught of tamer argument  
That lies before us, needful to be told.

Returned from that excursion,<sup>2</sup> soon I  
bade

Farewell for ever to the sheltered seats  
Of gowned students, quitted hall and  
bower,

And every comfort of that privileged  
ground,

Well pleased to pitch a vagrant tent among  
The unfenced regions of society.

Yet, undetermined to what course of life  
I should adhere, and seeming to possess  
A little space of intermediate time  
At full command, to London first I turned,  
In no disturbance of excessive hope,  
By personal ambition unenslaved,  
Frugal as there was need, and, though  
self-willed,

From dangerous passions free. Three  
years had flown

Since I had felt in heart and soul the shock  
Of the huge town's first presence, and had  
paced

Her endless streets, a transient visitant:  
Now, fixed amid that concourse of man-  
kind

Where Pleasure whirls about incessantly,  
And life and labour seem but one, I filled  
An idler's place; an idler well content  
To have a house (what matter for a home?)  
That owned him; living cheerfully abroad  
With unchecked fancy ever on the stir,  
And all my young affections out of doors.

<sup>1</sup> The City of Goslar, in Lower Saxony.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 274.

There was a time when whatsoe'er is feigned  
 Of airy palaces, and gardens built  
 By Genii of romance; or hath in grave  
 Authentic history been set forth of Rome,  
 Alcairo, Babylon, or Persepolis;  
 Or given upon report by pilgrim friars,  
 Of golden cities ten months' journey deep  
 Among Tartarian wilds—fell short, far  
 short,  
 Of what my fond simplicity believed  
 And thought of London—held me by a  
 chain  
 Less strong of wonder and obscure delight.  
 Whether the bolt of childhood's Fancy  
 shot  
 For me beyond its ordinary mark,  
 'Twere vain to ask; but in our flock of  
 boys  
 Was One, a cripple from his birth, whom  
 chance  
 Summoned from school to London; fortunate  
 And envied traveller! When the Boy  
 returned,  
 After short absence, curiously I scanned  
 His mien and person, nor was free, in  
 sooth,  
 From disappointment, not to find some  
 change  
 In look and air, from that new region  
 brought,  
 As if from Fairy-land. Much I questioned  
 him;  
 And every word he uttered, on my ears  
 Fell flatter than a caged parrot's note,  
 That answers unexpectedly awry,  
 And mocks the prompter's listening.  
 Marvellous things  
 Had vanity (quick Spirit that appears  
 Almost as deeply seated and as strong  
 In a Child's heart as fear itself) conceived  
 For my enjoyment. Would that I could  
 now  
 Recall what then I pictured to myself,  
 Of mitred Prelates, Lords in ermine clad,  
 The King, and the King's Palace, and,  
 not last,  
 Nor least, Heaven bless him! the renowned Lord Mayor.  
 Dreams not unlike to those which once  
 begat  
 A change of purpose in young Whittington,  
 When he, a friendless and a drooping boy,

Sate on a stone, and heard the bells speak  
 out  
 Articulate music. Above all, one thought  
 Baffled my understanding: how men lived  
 Even next-door neighbours, as we say, yet  
 still  
 Strangers, not knowing each the other's  
 name.

Oh, wondrous power of words, by simple  
 faith  
 Licensed to take the meaning that we love!  
 Vauxhall and Ranelagh! I then had heard  
 Of your green groves, and wilderness of  
 lamps  
 Dimming the stars, and fireworks magical,  
 And gorgeous ladies, under splendid  
 domes,  
 Floating in dance, or warbling high in air  
 The songs of spirits! Nor had Fancy fed  
 With less delight upon that other class  
 Of marvels, broad-day wonders permanent:  
 The River proudly bridged; the dizzy top  
 And Whispering Gallery of St. Paul's; the  
 tombs  
 Of Westminster; the Giants of Guildhall;  
 Bedlam, and those carved maniacs at the  
 gates,  
 Perpetually recumbent; Statues—man,  
 And the horse under him—in gilded pomp  
 Adorning flowery gardens, 'mid vast squares;  
 The Monument, and that Chamber of the  
 Tower  
 Where England's sovereigns sit in long  
 array,  
 Their steeds bestriding,—every mimic  
 shape  
 Cased in the gleaming mail the monarch  
 wore,  
 Whether for gorgeous tournament addressed,  
 Or life or death upon the battle-field.  
 Those bold imaginations in due time  
 Had vanished, leaving others in their stead:  
 And now I looked upon the living scene;  
 Familiarly perused it; oftentimes,  
 In spite of strongest disappointment,  
 pleased  
 Through courteous self-submission, as a  
 tax  
 Paid to the object by prescriptive right.  
 Rise up, thou monstrous ant-hill on the  
 plain

Of a too busy world! Before me flow,  
Thou endless stream of men and moving  
things!

Thy every-day appearance, as it strikes—  
With wonder heightened, or sublimed by  
awe—

On strangers, of all ages; the quick dance  
Of colours, lights, and forms; the deafen-  
ing din;

The comers and the goers face to face,  
Face after face; the string of dazzling  
wares,

Shop after shop, with symbols, blazoned  
names,

And all the tradesman's honours overhead:  
Here, fronts of houses, like a title-page,  
With letters huge inscribed from top to toe,  
Stationed above the door, like guardian  
saints;

There, allegoric shapes, female or male,  
Or physiognomies of real men,  
Land-warriors, kings, or admirals of the sea,  
Boyle, Shakspeare, Newton, or the attract-  
ive head

Of some quack-doctor, famous in his day.

Meanwhile the roar continues, till at  
length,

Escaped as from an enemy, we turn  
Abruptly into some sequestered nook,  
Still as a sheltered place when winds blow  
loud!

At leisure, thence, through tracts of thin  
resort,

And sights and sounds that come at inter-  
vals,

We take our way. A raree-show is here,  
With children gathered round; another  
street

Presents a company of dancing dogs,  
Or dromedary, with an antic pair  
Of monkeys on his back; a minstrel band  
Of Savoyards; or, single and alone,  
An English ballad-singer. Private courts,  
Gloomy as coffins, and unsightly lanes  
Thrilled by some female vendor's scream,  
belike

The very shrillest of all London cries,  
May then entangle our impatient steps;  
Conducted through those labyrinths, un-  
awares,

To privileged regions and inviolate,  
Where from their airy lodges studious  
lawyers

Look out on waters, walks, and gardens  
green.

Thence back into the throng, until we  
reach,

Following the tide that slackens by degrees,  
Some half-frequented scene, where wider  
streets

Bring straggling breezes of suburban air.  
Here files of ballads dangle from dead  
walls;

Advertisements, of giant-size, from high  
Press forward, in all colours, on the sight;  
These, bold in conscious merit, lower  
down;

*That*, fronted with a most imposing word,  
Is, peradventure, one in masquerade.

As on the broadening causeway we advance,  
Behold, turned upwards, a face hard and  
strong

In lineaments, and red with over-toil.

'Tis one encountered here and everywhere;  
A travelling cripple, by the trunk cut short,  
And stumping on his arms. In sailor's  
garb

Another lies at length, beside a range  
Of well-formed characters, with chalk in-  
scribed

Upon the smooth flat stones: the Nurse is  
here,

The Bachelor, that loves to sun himself,

The military Idler, and the Dame,

That field-ward takes her walk with decent  
steps.

Now homeward through the thickening  
hubbub, where

See, among less distinguishable shapes,  
The begging scavenger, with hat in hand;  
The Italian, as he thrids his way with care,  
Steadying, far-seen, a frame of images  
Upon his head; with basket at his breast  
The Jew; the stately and slow-moving  
Turk,

With freight of slippers piled beneath his  
arm!

Enough;—the mighty concourse I sur-  
veyed

With no unthinking mind, well pleased to  
note

Among the crowd all specimens of man,  
Through all the colours which the sun  
bestows,



And every character of form and face:  
 The Swede, the Russian; from the genial  
 south,  
 The Frenchman and the Spaniard; from  
 remote  
 America, the Hunter-Indian; Moors,  
 Malays, Lascars, the Tartar, the Chinese,  
 And Negro Ladies in white muslin gowns.

At leisure, then, I viewed, from day to  
 day,  
 The spectacles within doors,—birds and  
 beasts  
 Of every nature, and strange plants con-  
 vened  
 From every clime; and, next, those sights  
 that ape  
 The absolute presence of reality,  
 Expressing, as in mirror, sea and land,  
 And what earth is, and what she has to  
 show.

I do not here allude to subtlest craft,  
 By means refined attaining purest ends,  
 But imitations, fondly made in plain  
 Confession of man's weakness and his loves.  
 Whether the Painter, whose ambitious skill  
 Submits to nothing less than taking in  
 A whole horizon's circuit, do with power,  
 Like that of angels or commissioned spirits,  
 Fix us upon some lofty pinnacle,  
 Or in a ship on waters, with a world  
 Of life, and life-like mockery beneath,  
 Above, behind, far stretching and before;  
 Or more mechanic artist represent  
 By scale exact, in model, wood or clay,  
 From blended colours also borrowing help,  
 Some miniature of famous spots or things,—  
 St. Peter's Church; or, more aspiring aim,  
 In microscopic vision, Rome herself;  
 Or, haply, some choice rural haunt,—the  
 Falls

Of Tivoli; and, high upon that steep,  
 The Sibyl's mouldering Temple! every tree,  
 Villa, or cottage, lurking among rocks  
 Throughout the landscape; tuft, stone  
 scratch minute—

All that the traveller sees when he is there.

Add to these exhibitions, mute and still,  
 Others of wider scope, where living men,  
 Music, and shifting pantomimic scenes,  
 Diversified the allurements. Need I fear  
 To mention by its name, as in degree,  
 Lowest of these and humblest in attempt,

Yet richly graced with honours of her own,  
 Half-rural Sadler's Wells? Though at  
 that time

Intolerant, as is the way of youth  
 Unless itself be pleased, here more than  
 once

Taking my seat, I saw (nor blush to add,  
 With ample recompense) giants and dwarfs,  
 Clowns, conjurors, posture-masters, harle-  
 quins,

Amid the uproar of the rabblement,  
 Perform their feats. Nor was it mean  
 delight

To watch crude Nature work in untaught  
 minds;

To note the laws and progress of belief;  
 Though obstinate on this way, yet on that  
 How willingly we travel, and how far!

To have, for instance, brought upon the  
 scene

The champion, Jack the Giant-killer: Lo!  
 He dons his coat of darkness; on the stage  
 Walks, and achieves his wonders, from the  
 eye

Of living Mortal covert, "as the moon  
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave."

Delusion bold! and how can it be wrought?  
 The garb he wears is black as death, the  
 word

"Invisible" flames forth upon his chest.

Here, too, were "forms and pressures of  
 the time,"

Rough, bold, as Grecian comedy displayed  
 When Art was young; dramas of living  
 men,

And recent things yet warm with life; a  
 sea-fight,

Shipwreck, or some domestic incident  
 Divulged by Truth and magnified by Fame;  
 Such as the daring brotherhood of late  
 Set forth, too serious theme for that light  
 place—

I mean, O distant Friend! a story drawn  
 From our own ground,—the Maid of  
 Buttermere,—

And how, unfaithful to a virtuous wife  
 Deserted and deceived, the Spoiler came  
 And wooed the artless daughter of the hills,  
 And wedded her, in cruel mockery  
 Of love and marriage bonds. These words  
 to thee

Must needs bring back the moment when  
 we first,

Ere the broad world rang with the maiden's name,

Beheld her serving at the cottage inn;  
Both stricken, as she entered or withdrew,  
With admiration of her modest mien  
And carriage, marked by unexampled grace.

We since that time not unfamiliar  
Have seen her,—her discretion have observed,

Her just opinions, delicate reserve,  
Her patience, and humility of mind  
Unspoiled by commendation and the excess  
Of public notice—an offensive light  
To a meek spirit suffering inwardly.

From this memorial tribute to my theme  
I was returning, when, with sundry forms  
Commingled—shapes which met me in the way

That we must tread—thy image rose again,  
Maiden of Buttermere! She lives in peace  
Upon the spot where she was born and reared;

Without contamination doth she live  
In quietness, without anxiety:  
Beside the mountain chapel, sleeps in earth  
Her new-born infant, fearless as a lamb  
That, thither driven from some unsheltered place,

Rests underneath the little rock-like pile  
When storms are raging. Happy are they both—

Mother and child!—These feelings, in themselves

Trite, do yet scarcely seem so when I think  
On those ingenuous moments of our youth  
Ere we have learnt by use to slight the crimes

And sorrows of the world. Those simple days

Are now my theme; and, foremost of the scenes,

Which yet survive in memory, appears  
One, at whose centre sate a lovely Boy,  
A sportive infant, who, for six months' space,

Not more, had been of age to deal about  
Articulate prattle—Child as beautiful  
As ever clung around a mother's neck,  
Or father fondly gazed upon with pride.  
There, too, conspicuous for stature tall  
And large dark eyes, beside her infant stood  
The mother; but, upon her cheeks diffused,

False tints too well accorded with the glare  
From play-house lustres thrown without reserve

On every object near. The Boy had been  
The pride and pleasure of all lookers-on  
In whatsoever place, but seemed in this  
A sort of alien scattered from the clouds.  
Of lusty vigour, more than infantine  
He was in limb, in cheek a summer rose  
Just three parts blown—a cottage-child—if e'er,

By cottage-door on breezy mountain-side,  
Or in some sheltering vale, was seen a babe  
By Nature's gifts so favoured. Upon a board

Decked with refreshments had this child been placed

His little stage in the vast theatre,  
And there he sate, surrounded with a throng  
Of chance spectators, chiefly dissolute men  
And shameless women, treated and caressed;  
Ate, drank, and with the fruit and glasses played,

While oaths and laughter and indecent speech

Were rife about him as the songs of birds  
Contending after showers. The mother now

Is fading out of memory, but I see  
The lovely Boy as I beheld him then  
Among the wretched and the falsely gay,  
Like one of those who walked with hair unsinged

Amid the fiery furnace. Charms and spells  
Muttered on black and spiteful instigation  
Have stopped, as some believe, the kindest growths.

Ah, with how different spirit might a prayer  
Have been preferred, that this fair creature, checked

By special privilege of Nature's love,  
Should in his childhood be detained for ever!

But with its universal freight the tide  
Hath rolled along, and this bright innocent,  
Mary! may now have lived till he could look

With envy on thy nameless babe that sleeps,  
Beside the mountain chapel, undisturbed.

Four rapid years had scarcely then been told  
Since, travelling southward from our pastoral hills,

I heard, and for the first time in my life,  
 The voice of woman utter blasphemy—  
 Saw woman as she is, to open shame  
 Abandoned, and the pride of public vice;  
 I shuddered, for a barrier seemed at once  
 Thrown in that from humanity divorced  
 Humanity, splitting the race of man  
 In twain, yet leaving the same outward form.  
 Distress of mind ensued upon the sight,  
 And ardent meditation. Later years  
 Brought to such spectacle a milder sadness,  
 Feelings of pure commiseration, grief  
 For the individual and the overthrow  
 Of her soul's beauty; farther I was then  
 But seldom led, or wished to go; in truth  
 The sorrow of the passion stopped me there.

But let me now, less moved, in order take  
 Our argument. Enough is said to show  
 How casual incidents of real life,  
 Observed where pastime only had been  
 sought,

Outweighed, or put to flight, the set events  
 And measured passions of the stage, albeit  
 By Siddons trod in the fulness of her power.  
 Yet was the theatre my dear delight;  
 The very gilding, lamps and painted scrolls,  
 And all the mean upholstery of the place,  
 Wanted not animation, when the tide  
 Of pleasure ebbed but to return as fast  
 With the ever-shifting figures of the scene,  
 Solemn or gay: whether some beauteous  
 dame

Advanced in radiance through a deep recess  
 Of thick entangled forest, like the moon  
 Opening the clouds; or sovereign king,  
 announced

With flourishing trumpet, came in full-blown  
 state

Of the world's greatness, winding round  
 with train

Of courtiers, banners, and a length of  
 guards;

Or captive led in abject weeds, and jingling  
 His slender manacles; or romping girl  
 Bounced, leapt, and pawed the air; or  
 mumbling sire,

A scare-crow pattern of old age dressed up  
 In all the tatters of infirmity

All loosely put together, hobbled in,  
 Stumping upon a cane with which he smites,  
 From time to time, the solid boards, and  
 makes them

Prate somewhat loudly of the whereabouts

Of one so overloaded with his years.  
 But what of this! the laugh, the grin, gri-  
 mace,

The antics striving to outstrip each other,  
 Were all received, the least of them not lost,  
 With an unmeasured welcome. Through  
 the night,

Between the show, and many-headed mass  
 Of the spectators, and each several nook  
 Filled with its fray or brawl, how eagerly  
 And with what flashes, as it were, the mind  
 Turned this way—that way! sportive and  
 alert

And watchful, as a kitten when at play,  
 While winds are eddying round her, among  
 straws

And rustling leaves. Enchanting age and  
 sweet!

Romantic almost, looked at through a space,  
 How small, of intervening years! For then,  
 Though surely no mean progress had been  
 made

In meditations holy and sublime,  
 Yet something of a girlish child-like gloss  
 Of novelty survived for scenes like these;  
 Enjoyment haply handed down from times  
 When at a country-playhouse, some rude  
 barn

Tricked out for that proud use, if I per-  
 chance

Caught, on a summer evening through a  
 chink

In the old wall, an unexpected glimpse  
 Of daylight, the bare thought of where I  
 was

Gladdened me more than if I had been led  
 Into a dazzling cavern of romance,  
 Crowded with Genii busy among works  
 Not to be looked at by the common sun.

The matter that detains us now may seem,  
 To many, neither dignified enough  
 Nor arduous, yet will not be scorned by  
 them,

Who, looking inward, have observed the  
 ties

That bind the perishable hours of life  
 Each to the other, and the curious props  
 By which the world of memory and thought  
 Exists and is sustained. More lofty themes,  
 Such as at least do wear a prouder face,  
 Solicit our regard; but when I think  
 Of these, I feel the imaginative power  
 Languish within me; even then it slept,

When, pressed by tragic sufferings, the heart  
Was more than full; amid my sobs and tears

It slept, even in the pregnant season of youth.

For though I was most passionately moved  
And yielded to all changes of the scene  
With an obsequious promptness, yet the storm

Passed not beyond the suburbs of the mind;  
Save when realities of act and mien,  
The incarnation of the spirits that move  
In harmony amid the Poet's world,  
Rose to ideal grandeur, or, called forth  
By power of contrast, made me recognise,  
As at a glance, the things which I had shaped,

And yet not shaped, had seen and scarcely seen,

When, having closed the mighty Shakespeare's page,

I mused, and thought, and felt, in solitude.

Pass we from entertainments, that are such

Professedly, to others titled higher,  
Yet, in the estimate of youth at least,  
More near akin to those than names imply,—  
I mean the brawls of lawyers in their courts  
Before the ermined judge, or that great stage

Where senators, tongue-favoured men, perform,

Admired and envied. Oh! the beating heart,

When one among the prime of these rose up,—

One, of whose name from childhood we had heard

Familiarly, a household term, like those,  
The Bedfords, Glosters, Salsburys, of old,  
Whom the fifth Harry talks of. Silence! hush!

This is no trifter, no short-flighted wit,  
No stammerer of a minute, painfully  
Delivered. No! the Orator hath yoked  
The Hours, like young Aurora, to his car:  
Thrice welcome Presence! how can patience e'er

Grow weary of attending on a track  
That kindles with such glory! All are charmed,

Astonished; like a hero in romance,

He winds away his never-ending horn;  
Words follow words, sense seems to follow sense:

What memory and what logic! till the strain  
Transcendent, superhuman as it seemed,  
Grows tedious even in a young man's ear.

Genius of Burke! forgive the pen seduced  
By specious wonders, and too slow to tell  
Of what the ingenuous, what bewildered men,

Beginning to mistrust their boastful guides,  
And wise men, willing to grow wiser, caught,  
Rapt auditors! from thy most eloquent tongue—

Now mute, for ever mute in the cold grave.  
I see him,—old, but vigorous in age,—

Stand like an oak whose stag-horn branches start

Out of its leafy brow, the more to awe  
The younger brethren of the grove. But some—

While he forewarns, denounces, launches forth,

Against all systems built on abstract rights,  
Keen ridicule; the majesty proclaims  
Of Institutes and Laws, hallowed by time;  
Declares the vital power of social ties  
Endeared by Custom; and with high disdain,

Exploding upstart Theory, insists  
Upon the allegiance to which men are born—  
Some—say at once a froward multitude—  
Murmur (for truth is hated, where not loved)

As the winds fret within the Æolian cave,  
Galled by their monarch's chain. The times were big

With ominous change, which, night by night, provoked

Keen struggles, and black clouds of passion raised;

But memorable moments intervened,  
When Wisdom, like the Goddess from Jove's brain,

Broke forth in armour of resplendent words,  
Startling the Synod. Could a youth, and one

In ancient story versed, whose breast had heaved

Under the weight of classic eloquence,  
Sit, see, and hear, unthankful, uninspired?

Nor did the Pulpit's oratory fail

To achieve its higher triumph. Not unfelt  
Were its admonishments, nor lightly heard  
The awful truths delivered thence by tongues  
Endowed with various power to search the  
soul ;

Yet ostentation, domineering, oft  
Poured forth harangues, how sadly out of  
place !—

There have I seen a comely bachelor,  
Fresh from a toilette of two hours, ascend  
His rostrum, with seraphic glance look up,  
And, in a tone elaborately low  
Beginning, lead his voice through many a  
maze

A minuet course ; and, winding up his  
mouth,

From time to time, into an orifice  
Most delicate, a lurking eyelet, small,  
And only not invisible, again  
Open it out, diffusing thence a smile  
Of rapt irradiation, exquisite.

Meanwhile the Evangelists, Isaiah, Job,  
Moses, and he who penned, the other day,  
The Death of Abel, Shakspeare, and the  
Bard

Whose genius spangled o'er a gloomy theme  
With fancies thick as his inspiring stars,  
And Ossian (doubt not—'tis the naked  
truth)

Summoned from streamy Morven—each  
and all

Would, in their turns, lend ornaments and  
flowers

To entwine the crook of eloquence that  
helped

This pretty Shepherd, pride of all the  
plains,

To rule and guide his captivated flock.

I glance but at a few conspicuous marks,  
Leaving a thousand others, that, in hall,  
Court, theatre, conventicle, or shop,  
In public room or private, park or street,  
Each fondly reared on his own pedestal,  
Looked out for admiration. Folly, vice,  
Extravagance in gesture, mien, and dress,  
And all the strife of singularity,  
Lies to the ear, and lies to every sense—  
Of these, and of the living shapes they wear,  
There is no end. Such candidates for re-  
gard,

Although well pleased to be where they  
were found,

I did not hunt after, nor greatly prize,

Nor made unto myself a secret boast  
Of reading them with quick and curious  
eye ;

But, as a common produce, things that are  
To-day, to-morrow will be, took of them  
Such willing note, as, on some errand bound  
That asks not speed, a traveller might be-  
stow

On sea-shells that bestrew the sandy beach,  
Or daisies swarming through the fields of  
June.

But foolishness and madness in parade,  
Though most at home in this their dear  
domain,

Are scattered everywhere, no rarities,  
Even to the rudest novice of the Schools.  
Me, rather, it employed, to note, and keep  
In memory, those individual sights  
Of courage, or integrity, or truth,  
Or tenderness, which there, set off by foil,  
Appeared more touching. One will I  
select—

A Father—for he bore that sacred name ;—  
Him saw I, sitting in an open square,  
Upon a corner-stone of that low wall,  
Wherein were fixed the iron pales that  
fenced

A spacious grass-plot ; there, in silence,  
sat

This One Man, with a sickly babe out-  
stretched

Upon his knee, whom he had thither  
brought

For sunshine, and to breathe the fresher  
air.

Of those who passed, and me who looked  
at him,

He took no heed ; but in his brawny arms  
(The Artificer was to the elbow bare,  
And from his work this moment had been  
stolen)

He held the child, and, bending over it,  
As if he were afraid both of the sun  
And of the air, which he had come to seek,  
Eyed the poor babe with love unutterable.

As the black storm upon the mountain  
top

Sets off the sunbeam in the valley, so  
That huge fermenting mass of human-kind  
Serves as a solemn back-ground, or relief,  
To single forms and objects, whence they  
draw,

For feeling and contemplative regard,  
More than inherent liveliness and power.  
How oft, amid those overflowing streets,  
Have I gone forward with the crowd, and  
said

Unto myself, "The face of every one  
That passes by me is a mystery!"  
Thus have I looked, nor ceased to look,  
oppressed

By thoughts of what and whither, when  
and how,

Until the shapes before my eyes became  
A second-sight procession, such as glides  
Over still mountains, or appears in dreams;  
And once, far-travelled in such mood, be-  
yond

The reach of common indication, lost  
Amid the moving pageant, I was smitten  
Abruptly, with the view (a sight not rare)  
Of a blind Beggar, who, with upright face,  
Stood, propped against a wall, upon his  
chest

Wearing a written paper, to explain  
His story, whence he came, and who he  
was.

Caught by the spectacle my mind turned  
round

As with the might of waters; and apt type  
This label seemed of the utmost we can  
know,

Both of ourselves and of the universe;  
And, on the shape of that unmoving man,  
His steadfast face and sightless eyes, I  
gazed,

As if admonished from another world.

Though reared upon the base of outward  
things,

Structures like these the excited spirit  
mainly

Builds for herself; scenes different there are,  
Full-formed, that take, with small internal  
help,

Possession of the faculties,—the peace  
That comes with night; the deep solemnity  
Of nature's intermediate hours of rest,  
When the great tide of human life stands  
still:

The business of the day to come, unborn,  
Of that gone by, locked up, as in the grave;  
The blended calmness of the heavens and  
earth,

Moonlight and stars, and empty streets,  
and sounds

Unfrequent as in deserts; at late hours  
Of winter evenings, when unwholesome  
rains

Are falling hard, with people yet astir,  
The feeble salutation from the voice  
Of some unhappy woman, now and then  
Heard as we pass, when no one looks  
about,

Nothing is listened to. But these, I fear,  
Are falsely catalogued; things that are,  
are not,

As the mind answers to them, or the heart  
Is prompt, or slow, to feel. What say  
you, then,

To times, when half the city shall break  
out

Full of one passion, vengeance, rage, or  
fear?

To executions, to a street on fire,  
Mobs, riots, or rejoicings? From these  
sights

Take one,—that ancient festival, the Fair,  
Holden where martyrs suffered in past time,  
And named of St. Bartholomew; there,  
see

A work completed to our hands, that lays,  
If any spectacle on earth can do,

The whole creative powers of man asleep!—  
For once, the Muse's help will we implore,  
And she shall lodge us, wafted on her  
wings,

Above the press and danger of the crowd,  
Upon some showman's platform. What  
a shock

For eyes and ears! what anarchy and din,  
Barbarian and infernal,—a phantasma,  
Monstrous in colour, motion, shape, sight,  
sound!

Below, the open space, through every nook  
Of the wide area, twinkles, is alive

With heads; the midway region, and  
above,

Is thronged with staring pictures and huge  
scrolls,

Dumb proclamations of the Prodigies;  
With chattering monkeys dangling from  
their poles,

And children whirling in their roundabouts;  
With those that stretch the neck and strain  
the eyes,

And crack the voice in rivalry, the crowd  
Inviting; with buffoons against buffoons  
Grimacing, writhing, screaming,—him who  
grinds

The hurdy-gurdy, at the fiddle weaves,  
 Rattles the salt-box, thumps the kettle-  
 drum,  
 And him who at the trumpet puffs his  
 cheeks,  
 The silver-collared Negro with his timbrel,  
 Equestrians, tumblers, women, girls, and  
 boys,  
 Blue-breeched, pink-vested, with high-  
 towering plumes.—  
 All moveables of wonder, from all parts,  
 Are here—Albinos, painted Indians,  
 Dwarfs,  
 The Horse of knowledge, and the learned  
 Pig,  
 The Stone-eater, the man that swallows  
 fire,  
 Giants, Ventriloquists, the Invisible Girl,  
 The Bust that speaks and moves its gog-  
 gling eyes,  
 The Wax-work, Clock-work, all the mar-  
 vellous craft  
 Of modern Merlins, Wild Beasts, Puppet-  
 shows,  
 All out-o'-the-way, far-fetched, perverted  
 things,  
 All freaks of nature, all Promethean thoughts  
 Of man, his dulness, madness, and their  
 feats  
 All jumbled up together, to compose  
 A Parliament of Monsters. Tents and  
 Booths  
 Meanwhile, as if the whole were one vast  
 mill,  
 Are vomiting, receiving on all sides,  
 Men, Women, three-years' Children, Babes  
 in arms.

Oh, blank confusion ! true epitome  
 Of what the mighty City is herself,  
 To thousands upon thousands of her sons,  
 Living amid the same perpetual whirl  
 Of trivial objects, melted and reduced  
 To one identity, by differences  
 That have no law, no meaning, and no  
 end—

Oppression, under which even highest minds  
 Must labour, whence the strongest are not  
 free.

But though the picture weary out the eye,  
 By nature an unmanageable sight,  
 It is not wholly so to him who looks  
 In steadiness, who hath among least things  
 An under-sense of greatest ; sees the parts

As parts, but with a feeling of the whole.  
 This, of all acquisitions, first awaits  
 On sundry and most widely different modes  
 Of education, nor with least delight  
 On that through which I passed. Attention  
 springs,

And comprehensiveness and memory flow,  
 From early converse with the works of God  
 Among all regions ; chiefly where appear  
 Most obviously simplicity and power.

Think, how the everlasting streams and  
 woods,

Stretched and still stretching far and wide,  
 exalt

The roving Indian, on his desert sands :  
 What grandeur not unfelt, what pregnant  
 show

Of beauty, meets the sun-burnt Arab's eye :  
 And, as the sea propels, from zone to zone,  
 Its currents ; magnifies its shoals of life  
 Beyond all compass ; spreads, and sends  
 aloft

Armies of clouds,—even so, its powers and  
 aspects

Shape for mankind, by principles as fixed,  
 The views and aspirations of the soul  
 To majesty. Like virtue have the forms  
 Perennial of the ancient hills ; nor less  
 The changeful language of their counte-  
 nances

Quickens the slumbering mind, and aids  
 the thoughts,

However multitudinous, to move  
 With order and relation. This, if still,  
 As hitherto, in freedom I may speak,  
 Not violating any just restraint,  
 As may be hoped, of real modesty,—  
 This did I feel, in London's vast domain.  
 The Spirit of Nature was upon me there ;  
 The soul of Beauty and enduring Life  
 Vouchsafed her inspiration, and diffused.  
 Through meagre lines and colours, and the  
 press

Of self-destroying, transitory things,  
 Composure, and ennobling Harmony.

#### BOOK EIGHTH

RETROSPECT—LOVE OF NATURE LEADING  
 TO LOVE OF MAN

WHAT sounds are those, Helvellyn, that  
 are heard

Up to thy summit, through the depth of air  
Ascending, as if distance had the power  
To make the sounds more audible? What  
crowd

Covers, or sprinkles o'er, yon village green?  
Crowd seems it, solitary hill! to thee,  
Though but a little family of men,  
Shepherds and tillers of the ground—be-  
times

Assembled with their children and their  
wives,

And here and there a stranger interspersed.  
They hold a rustic fair—a festival,  
Such as, on this side now, and now on  
that,

Repeated through his tributary vales,  
Helvellyn, in the silence of his rest,  
Sees annually, if clouds towards either  
ocean

Blown from their favourite resting-place, or  
mists

Dissolved, have left him an unshrouded  
head.

Delightful day it is for all who dwell  
In this secluded glen, and eagerly  
They give it welcome. Long ere heat of  
noon,

From byre or field the kine were brought;  
the sheep

Are penned in cotes; the chaffering is  
begun.

The heifer lows, uneasy at the voice  
Of a new master; bleat the flocks aloud.  
Booths are there none; a stall or two is  
here;

A lame man or a blind, the one to beg,  
The other to make music; hither, too,  
From far, with basket, slung upon her arm,  
Of hawker's wares—books, pictures, combs,  
and pins—

Some aged woman finds her way again,  
Year after year, a punctual visitant!  
There also stands a speech-maker by rote,  
Pulling the strings of his boxed raree-show;  
And in the lapse of many years may come  
Prouder itinerant, mountebank, or he  
Whose wonders in a covered wain lie hid.  
But one there is, the loveliest of them all,  
Some sweet lass of the valley, looking out  
For gains, and who that sees her would not  
buy?

Fruits of her father's orchard are her wares,  
And with the ruddy produce she walks  
round

Among the crowd, half pleased with, half  
ashamed

Of, her new office, blushing restlessly.  
The children now are rich, for the old  
to-day

Are generous as the young; and, if content  
With looking on, some ancient wedded pair  
Sit in the shade together; while they gaze,  
"A cheerful smile unbends the wrinkled  
brow,

The days departed start again to life,  
And all the scenes of childhood reappear,  
Faint, but more tranquil, like the changing  
sun

To him who slept at noon and wakes at  
eve,"<sup>1</sup>

Thus gaiety and cheerfulness prevail,  
Spreading from young to old, from old to  
young,

And no one seems to want his share.—  
Immense

Is the recess, the circumambient world  
Magnificent, by which they are embraced:  
They move about upon the soft green turf:  
How little they, they and their doings,  
seem,

And all that they can further or obstruct!  
Through-utter weakness pitifully dear,  
As tender infants are: and yet how great!  
For all things serve them: them the morning  
light

Loves, as it glistens on the silent rocks;  
And them the silent rocks, which now from  
high

Look down upon them; the reposing clouds;  
The wild brooks prattling from invisible  
haunts;

And old Helvellyn, conscious of the stir  
Which animates this day their calm abode.

With deep devotion, Nature, did I feel,  
In that enormous City's turbulent world  
Of men and things, what benefit I owed  
To thee, and those domains of rural peace,  
Where to the sense of beauty first my heart  
Was opened; tract more exquisitely fair  
Than that famed paradise of ten thousand  
trees,

Or Gehol's matchless gardens, for delight  
Of the Tartarian dynasty composed  
(Beyond that mighty wall, not fabulous,

<sup>1</sup> These lines are from a descriptive Poem—  
"Malvern Hills"—by one of Mr. Wordsworth's  
oldest friends, Mr. Joseph Cottle.



China's stupendous mound) by patient toil  
Of myriads and boon nature's lavish help;  
There, in a clime from widest empire chosen,  
Fulfilling (could enchantment have done  
more?)

A sumptuous dream of flowery lawns, with  
domes

Of pleasure sprinkled over, shady dells  
For eastern monasteries, sunny mounts  
With temples crested, bridges, gondolas,  
Rocks, dens, and groves of foliage taught  
to melt

Into each other their obsequious hues,  
Vanished and vanishing in subtle chase,  
Too fine to be pursued; or standing forth  
In no discordant opposition, strong  
And gorgeous as the colours side by side  
Bedded among rich plumes of tropic birds;  
And mountains over all, embracing all;  
And all the landscape, endlessly enriched  
With waters running, falling, or asleep.

But lovelier far than this, the paradise  
Where I was reared; in Nature's primitive  
gifts

Favoured no less, and more to every sense  
Delicious, seeing that the sun and sky,  
The elements, and seasons as they change,  
Do find a worthy fellow-labourer there—  
Man free, man working for himself, with  
choice

Of time, and place, and object; by his  
wants,

His comforts, native occupations, cares,  
Cheerfully led to individual ends  
Or social, and still followed by a train  
Unwooded, unthought-of even—simplicity,  
And beauty, and inevitable grace.

Yea, when a glimpse of those imperial  
bowers

Would to a child be transport over-great,  
When but a half-hour's roam through such  
a place

Would leave behind a dance of images,  
That shall break in upon his sleep for weeks;  
Even then the common haunts of the green  
earth,

And ordinary interests of man,  
Which they embosom, all without regard  
As both may seem, are fastening on the  
heart

Insensibly, each with the other's help.  
For me, when my affections first were led

From kindred, friends, and playmates, to  
partake

Love for the human creature's absolute self,  
That noticeable kindliness of heart  
Sprang out of fountains, there abounding  
most,

Where sovereign Nature dictated the tasks  
And occupations which her beauty adorned,  
And Shepherds were the men that pleased  
me first;

Not such as Saturn ruled 'mid Latian wilds,  
With arts and laws so tempered, that their  
lives

Left, even to us tolling in this late day,  
A bright tradition of the golden age;  
Not such as, 'mid Arcadian fastnesses  
Sequestered, handed down among them-  
selves

Felicity, in Grecian song renowned;  
Nor such as—when an adverse fate had  
driven,

From house and home, the courtly band  
whose fortunes

Entered, with Shakspeare's genius, the wild  
woods

Of Arden—amid sunshine or in shade  
Culled the best fruits of Time's uncounted  
hours,

Ere Phœbe sighed for the false Ganymede;  
Or there where Perdita and Florizel  
Together danced, Queen of the feast, and  
King;

Nor such as Spenser fabled. True it is,  
That I had heard (what he perhaps had  
seen)

Of maids at sunrise bringing in from far  
Their May-bush, and along the streets in  
flocks

Parading with a song of taunting rhymes,  
Aimed at the laggards slumbering within  
doors;

Had also heard, from those who yet remem-  
bered,

Tales of the May-pole dance, and wreaths  
that decked

Porch, door-way, or kirk-pillar; and of  
youths,

Each with his maid, before the sun was up,  
By annual custom, issuing forth in troops,  
To drink the waters of some sainted well,  
And hang it round with garlands. Love  
survives;

But, for such purpose, flowers no longer  
grow:

The times, too sage, perhaps too proud,  
have dropped

These lighter graces; and the rural ways  
And manners which my childhood looked  
upon

Were the unluxuriant produce of a life  
Intent on little but substantial needs,  
Yet rich in beauty, beauty that was felt.  
But images of danger and distress,  
Man suffering among awful Powers and  
Forms;

Of this I heard, and saw enough to make  
Imagination restless; nor was free  
Myself from frequent perils; nor were tales  
Wanting,—the tragedies of former times,  
Hazards and strange escapes, of which the  
rocks

Immutable, and overflowing streams,  
Where'er I roamed, were speaking monu-  
ments.

Smooth life had flock and shepherd in  
old time,  
Long springs and tepid winters, on the  
banks

Of delicate Galesus; and no less  
Those scattered along Adria's myrtle shores:  
Smooth life had herdsman, and his snow-  
white herd

To triumphs and to sacrificial rites  
Devoted, on the inviolable stream  
Of rich Clitumnus; and the goat-herd  
lived

As calmly, underneath the pleasant brows  
Of cool Lucretilis, where the pipe was heard  
Of Pan, Invisible God, thrilling the rocks  
With tutelary music, from all harm  
The fold protecting. I myself, mature  
In manhood then, have seen a pastoral tract  
Like one of these, where Fancy might run  
wild,

Though under skies less generous, less  
serene:

There, for her own delight had Nature  
framed

A pleasure-ground, diffused a fair expanse  
Of level pasture, islanded with groves  
And banked with woody risings; but the  
Plain

Endless, here opening widely out, and there  
Shut up in lesser lakes or beds of lawn  
And intricate recesses, creek or bay  
Sheltered within a shelter, where at large  
The shepherd strays, a rolling hut his home.

Thither he comes with spring-time, there  
abides

All summer, and at sunrise ye may hear  
His flageolet to liquid notes of love  
Attuned, or sprightly fife resounding far.  
Nook is there none, nor tract of that vast  
space

Where passage opens, but the same shall  
have

In turn its visitant, telling there his hours  
In unlaborious pleasure, with no task  
More toilsome than to carve a beechen bowl  
For spring or fountain, which the traveller  
finds,

When through the region he pursues at will  
His devious course. A glimpse of such  
sweet life

I saw when, from the melancholy walls  
Of Goslar, once imperial, I renewed  
My daily walk along that wide champaign,  
That, reaching to her gates, spreads east and  
west,

And northwards, from beneath the moun-  
tainous verge

Of the Hercynian forest. Yet, hail to you  
Moors, mountains, headlands, and ye  
hollow vales,

Ye long deep channels for the Atlantic's  
voice,

Powers of my native region! Ye that seize  
The heart with firmer grasp! Your snows  
and streams

Ungovernable, and your terrifying winds,  
That howl so dismally for him who treads  
Companionless your awful solitudes!  
There, 'tis the shepherd's task the winter  
long

To wait upon the storms: of their approach  
Sagacious, into sheltering coves he drives  
His flock, and thither from the homestead  
bears

A toilsome burden up the craggy ways,  
And deals it out, their regular nourishment  
Strewn on the frozen snow. And when the  
spring

Looks out, and all the pastures dance with  
lambs,

And when the flock, with warmer weather,  
climbs

Higher and higher, him his office leads  
To watch their goings, whatsoever track  
The wanderers choose. For this he quits  
his home

At day-spring, and no sooner doth the sun

Begin to strike him with a fire-like heat,  
Than he lies down upon some shining rock,  
And breakfasts with his dog. When they  
have stolen,

As is their wont, a pittance from strict time,  
For rest not needed or exchange of love,  
Then from his couch he start's; and now  
his feet

Crush out a livelier fragrance from the  
flowers

Of lowly thyme, by Nature's skill enwrought  
In the wild turf: the lingering dews of morn  
Smoke round him, as from hill to hill he  
hies,

His staff pretending like a hunter's spear,  
Or by its aid leaping from crag to crag,  
And o'er the brawling beds of unbridged  
streams.

Philosophy, methinks, at Fancy's call,  
Might deign to follow him through what he  
does

Or sees in his day's march; himself he feels,  
In those vast regions where his service lies,  
A freeman, wedded to his life of hope  
And hazard, and hard labour interchanged  
With that majestic indolence so dear  
To native man. A rambling schoolboy, thus,  
I felt his presence in his own domain,  
As of a lord and master, or a power,  
Or genius, under Nature, under God,  
Presiding; and severest solitude  
Had more commanding looks when he was  
there.

When up the lonely brooks on rainy days  
Angling I went, or trod the trackless hills  
By mists bewildered, suddenly mine eyes  
Have glanced upon him distant a few steps,  
In size a giant, stalking through thick fog,  
His sheep like Greenland bears; or, as he  
stepped

Beyond the boundary line of some hill-  
shadow,

His form bath flashed upon me, glorified  
By the deep radiance of the setting sun:  
Or him have I descried in distant sky,  
A solitary object and sublime,  
Above all height! like an aerial cross  
Stationed alone upon a spiry rock  
Of the Chartreuse, for worship. 'Thus was  
man

Ennobled outwardly before my sight,  
And thus my heart was early introduced  
To an unconscious love and reverence  
Of human nature; hence the human form

To me became an index of delight,  
Of grace and honour, power and worthiness.  
Meanwhile this creature—spiritual almost  
As those of books, but more exalted far;  
Far more of an imaginative form  
Than the gay Corin of the groves, who lives  
For his own fancies, or to dance by the  
hour,

In coronal, with Phyllis in the midst—  
Was, for the purposes of kind, a man  
With the most common; husband, father;  
learned,

Could teach, admonish; suffered with the  
rest

From vice and folly, wretchedness and fear;  
Of this I little saw, cared less for it,  
But something must have felt.

Call ye these appearances—  
Which I beheld of shepherds in my youth,  
This sanctity of Nature given to man—  
A shadow, a delusion, ye who pore  
On the dead letter, miss the spirit of things;  
Whose truth is not a motion or a shape  
Instinct with vital functions, but a block  
Or waxen image which yourselves have made,  
And ye adore! But blessed be the God  
Of Nature and of Man that this was so;  
That men before my inexperienced eyes  
Did first present themselves thus purified,  
Removed, and to a distance that was fit:  
And so we all of us in some degree  
Are led to knowledge, wheresoever led,  
And howsoever; were it otherwise,  
And we found evil fast as we find good  
In our first years, or think that it is found,  
How could the innocent heart bear up and  
live!

But doubly fortunate my lot; not here  
Alone, that something of a better life  
Perhaps was round me than it is the privi-  
lege

Of most to move in, but that first I looked  
At Man through objects that were great or  
fair;

First communed with him by their help.  
And thus

Was founded a sure safeguard and defence  
Against the weight of meanness, selfish  
cares,

Coarse manners, vulgar passions, that beat  
in

On all sides from the ordinary world  
In which we traffic. Starting from this  
point

I had my face turned toward the truth,  
began

With an advantage furnished by that kind  
Of prepossession, without which the soul  
Receives no knowledge that can bring forth  
good,

No genuine insight ever comes to her.  
From the restraint of over-watchful eyes  
Preserved, I moved about, year after year,  
Happy, and now most thankful that my  
walk

Was guarded from too early intercourse  
With the deformities of crowded life,  
And those ensuing laughters and contempts,  
Self-pleasing, which, if we would wish to  
think

With a due reverence on earth's rightful  
lord,

Here placed to be the inheritor of heaven,  
Will not permit us; but pursue the mind,  
That to devotion willingly would rise,  
Into the temple and the temple's heart.

Yet deem not, Friend! that human kind  
with me

Thus early took a place pre-eminent;  
Nature herself was, at this unripe time,  
But secondary to my own pursuits  
And animal activities, and all  
Their trivial pleasures; and when these had  
drooped

And gradually expired, and Nature, prized  
For her own sake, became my joy, even  
then—

And upwards through late youth, until not  
less

Than two-and-twenty summers had been  
told—

Was Man in my affections and regards  
Subordinate to her, her visible forms  
And viewless agencies: a passion, she,  
A rapture often, and immediate love  
Ever at hand; he, only a delight  
Occasional, an accidental grace,  
His hour being not yet come. Far less had  
then

The inferior creatures, beast or bird, attuned  
My spirit to that gentleness of love,  
(Though they had long been carefully  
observed),

Won from me those minute obeisances  
Of tenderness, which I may number now  
With my first blessings. Nevertheless, on  
these

The light of beauty did not fall in vain,  
Or grandeur circumfuse them to no end.

But when that first poetic faculty  
Of plain Imagination and severe,  
No longer a mute influence of the soul,  
Ventured, at some rash Muse's earnest call,  
To try her strength among harmonious  
words;

And to book-notions and the rules of art  
Did knowingly conform itself; there came  
Among the simple shapes of human life  
A wilfulness of fancy and conceit;  
And Nature and her objects beautified  
These fictions, as in some sort, in their turn,  
They burnished her. From touch of this  
new power

Nothing was safe: the elder-tree that grew  
Beside the well-known charnel-house had  
then

A dismal look: the yew-tree had its ghost,  
That took his station there for ornament:  
The dignities of plain occurrence then  
Were tasteless, and truth's golden mean, a  
point

Where no sufficient pleasure could be found.  
Then, if a widow, staggering with the blow  
Of her distress, was known to have turned  
her steps

To the cold grave in which her husband  
slept,

One night, or haply more than one, through  
pain

Or half-insensate impotence of mind,  
The fact was caught at greedily, and there  
She must be visitant the whole year through,  
Wetting the turf with never-ending tears.

Through quaint obliquities I might pursue  
These cravings; when the foxglove, one  
by one,

Upwards through every stage of the tall  
stem,

Had shed beside the public way its bells,  
And stood of all dismantled, save the last  
Left at the tapering ladder's top, that  
seemed

To bend as doth a slender blade of grass  
Tipped with a rain-drop, Fancy loved to  
seat,

Beneath the plant despoiled, but crested still  
With this last relic, soon itself to fall,  
Some vagrant mother, whose arch little  
ones,

All unconcerned by her dejected plight,  
 Laughed as with rival eagerness their  
     hands  
 Gathered the purple cups that round them  
     lay,  
 Strewing the turf's green slope.

                                    A diamond light  
 (Whene'er the summer sun, declining,  
     smote  
 A smooth rock wet with constant springs)  
     was seen

Sparkling from out a copse-clad bank that  
     rose

Fronting our cottage. Oft beside the  
     hearth

Seated, with open door, often and long  
 Upon this restless lustre have I gazed,  
 That made my fancy restless as itself.  
 'Twas now for me a burnished silver shield  
 Suspended over a knight's tomb, who lay  
 Inglorious, buried in the dusky wood:  
 An entrance now into some magic cave  
 Or palace built by fairies of the rock;  
 Nor could I have been bribed to disen-  
     chant

The spectacle, by visiting the spot.  
 Thus wilful Fancy, in no hurtful mood,  
 Engrafted far-fetched shapes on feelings  
     bred

By pure Imagination: busy Power  
 She was, and with her ready pupil turned  
 Instinctively to human passions, then  
 Least understood. Yet, 'mid the fervent  
     swarm

Of these vagaries, with an eye so rich  
 As mine was through the bounty of a grand  
 And lovely region, I had forms distinct  
 To steady me: each airy thought revolved  
 Round a substantial centre, which at once  
 Incited it to motion, and controlled.  
 I did not pine like one in cities bred,  
 As was thy melancholy lot, dear Friend!  
 Great Spirit as thou art, in endless dreams  
 Of sickliness, disjoining, joining, things  
 Without the light of knowledge. Where  
     the harm,

If, when the woodman languished with  
     disease

Induced by sleeping nightly on the ground  
 Within his sod-built cabin, Indian-wise,  
 I called the pangs of disappointed love,  
 And all the sad etcetera of the wrong,  
 To help him to his grave? Meanwhile the  
     man,

If not already from the woods retired  
 To die at home, was haply, as I knew,  
 Withering by slow degrees, 'mid gentle  
     airs,

Birds, running streams, and hills so beau-  
     tiful

On golden evenings, while the charcoal  
     pile

Breathed up its smoke, an image of his  
     ghost

Or spirit that full soon must take her flight.  
 Nor shall we not be tending towards that  
     point

Of sound humanity to which our Tale  
 Leads, though by sinuous ways, if here I  
     show

How Fancy, in a season when she wove  
 Those slender cords, to guide the un-  
     conscious Boy

For the Man's sake, could feed at Nature's  
     call

Some pensive musings which might well  
     besem

Maturer years.

                                    A grove there is whose boughs  
 Stretch from the western marge of Thurston-  
     mere,

With length of shade so thick, that whoso  
     glides

Along the line of low-roofed water, moves  
 As in a cloister. Once—while, in that  
     shade

Loitering, I watched the golden beams of  
     light

Flung from the setting sun, as they reposed  
 In silent beauty on the naked ridge

Of a high eastern hill—thus flowed my  
     thoughts

In a pure stream of words fresh from the  
     heart:

<sup>1</sup> Dear native Regions, wheresoe'er shall  
     close

My mortal course, there will I think on  
     you;

Dying, will cast on you a backward look;  
 Even as this setting sun (albeit the Vale  
 Is no where touched by one memorial  
     gleam)

Doth with the fond remains of his last  
     power

Still linger, and a farewell lustre sheds,  
 On the dear mountain-tops where first he  
     rose.

<sup>1</sup> See page 2.

Enough of humble arguments; recall,  
My Song! those high emotions which thy  
voice  
Has heretofore made known; that bursting  
forth  
Of sympathy, inspiring and inspired,  
When everywhere a vital pulse was felt,  
And all the several frames of things, like  
stars,  
Through every magnitude distinguishable,  
Shone mutually indebted, or half lost  
Each in the other's blaze, a galaxy  
Of life and glory. In the midst stood  
Man,  
Outwardly, inwardly contemplated,  
As, of all visible natures, crown, though  
born  
Of dust, and kindred to the worm; a Being,  
Both in perception and discernment, first  
In every capability of rapture,  
Through the divine effect of power and  
love;  
As, more than anything we know, instinct  
With godhead, and, by reason and by will,  
Acknowledging dependency sublime.

Ere long, the lonely mountains left, I  
moved,  
Begirt, from day to day, with temporal  
shapes  
Of vice and folly thrust upon my view,  
Objects of sport, and ridicule, and scorn,  
Manners and characters discriminate,  
And little bustling passions that eclipse,  
As well they might, the impersonated  
thought,  
The idea, or abstraction of the kind.

An idler among academic bowers,  
Such was my new condition, as at large  
Has been set forth; yet here the vulgar  
light  
Of present, actual, superficial life,  
Gleaming through colouring of other times,  
Old usages and local privilege,  
Was welcomed, softened, if not solemnised.  
This notwithstanding, being brought more  
near  
To vice and guilt, forerunning wretched-  
ness,  
I trembled,—thought, at times, of human  
life  
With an indefinite terror and dismay,  
Such as the storms and angry elements

Had bred in me; but gloomier far, a dim  
Analogy to uproar and misrule,  
Disquiet, danger, and obscurity.

It might be told (but wherefore speak of  
things  
Common to all?) that, seeing, I was led  
Gravely to ponder—judging between good  
And evil, not as for the mind's delight  
But for her guidance—one who was to  
act,  
As sometimes to the best of feeble means  
I did, by human sympathy impelled:  
And, through dislike and most offensive  
pain,  
Was to the truth conducted; of this faith  
Never forsaken, that, by acting well,  
And understanding, I should learn to love  
The end of life, and everything we know.

Grave Teacher, stern Preceptress! for at  
times

Thou canst put on an aspect most severe;  
London, to thee I willingly return.  
Erewhile my verse played idly with the  
flowers

Enwrought upon thy mantle; satisfied  
With that amusement, and a simple look  
Of child-like inquisition now and then  
Cast upwards on thy countenance, to detect  
Some inner meanings which might harbour  
there.

But how could I in mood so light indulge,  
Keeping such fresh remembrance of the  
day,

When, having thridded the long labyrinth  
Of the suburban villages, I first  
Entered thy vast dominion? On the roof  
Of an itinerant vehicle I sate,  
With vulgar men about me, trivial forms  
Of houses, pavement, streets, of men and  
things,—

Mean shapes on every side: but, at the  
instant,

When to myself it fairly might be said,  
The threshold now is overpast, (how strange  
That aught external to the living mind  
Should have such mighty sway! yet so it  
was),

A weight of ages did at once descend  
Upon my heart; no thought embodied, no  
Distinct remembrances, but weight and  
power,—

Power growing under weight: alas! I feel

That I am trifling: 'twas a moment's  
pause,—

All that took place within me came and  
went

As in a moment; yet with Time it dwells,  
And grateful memory, as a thing divine.

The curious traveller, who, from open  
day,  
Hath passed with torches into some huge  
cave,

The Grotto of Antiparos, or the Den  
In old time haunted by that Danish Witch,  
Yordas; he looks around and sees the vault  
Widening on all sides; sees, or thinks he  
sees,

Erelong, the massy roof above his head,  
That instantly unsettles and recedes,—  
Substance and shadow, light and darkness,  
all

Commingled, making up a canopy  
Of shapes and forms and tendencies to shape  
That shift and vanish, change and inter-  
change

Like spectres,—ferment silent and sublime!  
That after a short space works less and  
less,

Till, every effort, every motion gone,  
The scene before him stands in perfect view  
Exposed, and lifeless as a written book!—  
But let him pause awhile, and look again,  
And a new quickening shall succeed, at first  
Beginning timidly, then creeping fast,  
Till the whole cave, so late a senseless mass,  
Busies the eye with images and forms  
Boldly assembled,—here is shadowed forth  
From the projections, wrinkles, cavities,  
A variegated landscape,—there the shape  
Of some gigantic warrior clad in mail,  
The ghostly semblance of a hooded monk,  
Veiled nun, or pilgrim resting on his staff:  
Strange congregation! yet not slow to meet  
Eyes that perceive through minds that can  
inspire.

Even in such sort had I at first been  
moved,

Nor otherwise continued to be moved,  
As I explored the vast metropolis,  
Fount of my country's destiny and the  
world's;

That great emporium, chronicle at once  
And burial-place of passions, and their home  
Imperial, their chief living residence.

With strong sensations teeming as it did  
Of past and present, such a place must  
needs

Have pleased me, seeking knowledge at  
that time

Far less than craving power; yet knowledge  
came,

Sought or unsought, and influxes of power  
Came, of themselves, or at her call derived  
In fits of kindest apprehensiveness,  
From all sides, when whate'er was in itself  
Capacious found, or seemed to find, in me  
A correspondent amplitude of mind;  
Such is the strength and glory of our youth!  
The human nature unto which I felt  
That I belonged, and revered with love,  
Was not a punctual presence, but a spirit  
Diffused through time and space, with aid  
derived

Of evidence from monuments, erect,  
Prostrate, or leaning towards their common  
rest

In earth, the widely scattered wreck sublime  
Of vanished nations, or more clearly drawn  
From books and what they picture and  
record.

'Tis true, the history of our native land—  
With those of Greece compared and popular  
Rome,

And in our high-wrought modern narratives  
Strip of their harmonising soul, the life  
Of manners and familiar incidents—  
Had never much delighted me. And less  
Than other intellects had mine been used  
To lean upon extrinsic circumstance  
Of record or tradition; but a sense  
Of what in the Great City had been done  
And suffered, and was doing, suffering, still,  
Weighed with me, could support the test of  
thought;

And, in despite of all that had gone by,  
Or was departing never to return,  
There I conversed with majesty and power  
Like independent natures. Hence the place  
Was thronged with impregnations like the  
Wilds

In which my early feelings had been nursed—  
Bare hills and valleys, full of caverns, rocks,  
And audible seclusions, dashing lakes,  
Echoes and waterfalls, and pointed crags  
That into music touch the passing wind.  
Here then my young imagination found  
No uncongenial element; could here

Among new objects serve or give command,  
Even as the heart's occasions might require,  
To forward reason's else too-scrupulous  
march.

The effect was, still more elevated views  
Of human nature. Neither vice nor guilt,  
Debasement undergone by body or mind,  
Nor all the misery forced upon my sight,  
Misery not lightly passed, but sometimes  
scanned

Most feelingly, could overthrow my trust  
In what we *may* become; induce belief  
That I was ignorant, had been falsely  
taught,

A solitary, who with vain conceits  
Had been inspired, and walked about in  
dreams.

From those sad scenes when meditation  
turned,

Lo! everything that was indeed divine  
Retained its purity inviolate,  
Nay brighter shone, by this portentous  
gloom

Set off; such opposition as aroused  
The mind of Adam, yet in Paradise  
Though fallen from bliss, when in the East  
he saw

<sup>1</sup> Darkness ere day's mid course, and  
morning light

More orient in the western cloud, that drew  
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,  
Descending slow with something heavenly  
fraught.

Add also, that among the multitudes  
Of that huge city, oftentimes was seen  
Affectingly set forth, more than elsewhere  
Is possible, the unity of man,  
One spirit over ignorance and vice  
Predominant, in good and evil hearts;  
One sense for moral judgments, as one eye  
For the sun's light. The soul when smitten  
thus

By a sublime *idea*, whence so'er  
Vouchsafed for union or communion, feeds  
On the pure bliss, and takes her rest with  
God.

Thus from a very early age, O Friend!  
My thoughts by slow gradations had been  
drawn

To human-kind, and to the good and ill  
Of human life: Nature had led me on;

<sup>1</sup> From Milton, *Par. Lost*, xi. 204.

And oft amid the "busy hum" I seemed  
To travel independent of her help,  
As if I had forgotten her; but no,  
The world of human-kind outweighed not  
hers

In my habitual thoughts; the scale of love,  
Though filling daily, still was light, compared  
With that in which *her* mighty objects lay.

## BOOK NINTH

### RESIDENCE IN FRANCE

EVEN as a river,—partly (it might seem)  
Yielding to old remembrances, and swayed  
In part by fear to shape a way direct,  
That would engulf him soon in the raven-  
ous sea—

Turns, and will measure back his course,  
far back,

Seeking the very regions which he crossed  
In his first outset; so have we, my Friend!  
Turned and returned with intricate delay.  
Or as a traveller, who has gained the brow  
Of some aerial Down, while there he halts  
For breathing-time, is tempted to review  
The region left behind him; and, if aught  
Deserving notice have escaped regard,  
Or been regarded with too careless eye,  
Strives, from that height, with one and yet  
one more

Last look, to make the best amends he may:  
So have we lingered. Now we start afresh  
With courage, and new hope risen on our  
toil.

Fair greetings to this shapeless eagerness,  
Whene'er it comes! needful in work so  
long,

Thrice needful to the argument which now  
Awaits us! Oh, how much unlike the  
past!

Free as a colt at pasture on the hill,  
I ranged at large, through London's wide  
domain,

Month after month. Obscurely did I live,  
Not seeking frequent intercourse with men,  
By literature, or elegance, or rank,  
Distinguished. Scarcely was a year thus  
spent

Ere I forsook the crowded solitude,  
With less regret for its luxurious pomp,  
And all the nicely-guarded shows of art,



Than for the humble book-stalls in the  
streets,  
Exposed to eye and hand where'er I  
turned.

France lured me forth ; the realm that I  
had crossed  
So lately, journeying toward the snow-clad  
Alps.

But now, relinquishing the scrip and staff,  
And all enjoyment which the summer sun  
Sheds round the steps of those who meet  
the day

With motion constant as his own, I went  
Prepared to sojourn in a pleasant town,  
Washed by the current of the stately Loire.

Through Paris lay my readiest course,  
and there

Sojourning a few days, I visited  
In haste, each spot of old or recent fame,  
The latter chiefly ; from the field of Mars  
Down to the suburbs of St. Antony,  
And from Mont Martre southward to the  
Dome

Of Geneviève. In both her clamorous  
Halls,

The National Synod and the Jacobins,  
I saw the Revolutionary Power  
Toss like a ship at anchor, rocked by  
storms ;

The Arcades I traversed, in the Palace  
huge

Of Orleans ; coasted round and round the  
line

Of Tavern, Brothel, Gaming-house, and  
Shop,

Great rendezvous of worst and best, the  
walk

Of all who had a purpose, or had not ;  
I stared and listened, with a stranger's  
ears,

To Hawkers and Haranguers, hubbub  
wild !

And hissing Factionists with ardent eyes,  
In knots, or pairs, or single. Not a look  
Hope takes, or Doubt or Fear is forced to  
wear,

But seemed there present ; and I scanned  
them all,

Watched every gesture uncontrollable,  
Of anger, and vexation, and despite,  
All side by side, and struggling face to face,  
With gaiety and dissolute idleness.

Where silent zephyrs sported with the  
dust

Of the Bastille, I sate in the open sun,  
And from the rubbish gathered up a stone,  
And pocketed the relic, in the guise  
Of an enthusiast ; yet, in honest truth,  
I looked for something that I could not  
find,

Affecting more emotion than I felt ;  
For 'tis most certain, that these various  
sights,

However potent their first shock, with me  
Appeared to recompense the traveller's  
pains

Less than the painted Magdalene of Le  
Brun,

A beauty exquisitely wrought, with hair  
Dishevelled, gleaming eyes, and rueful cheek  
Pale and bedropped with overflowing tears.

But hence to my more permanent abode  
I hasten ; there, by novelties in speech,  
Domestic manners, customs, gestures, looks,  
And all the attire of ordinary life,  
Attention was engrossed ; and, thus amused,  
I stood 'mid those concussions, uncon-  
cerned,

Tranquil almost, and careless as a flower  
Glassed in a green-house, or a parlour  
shrub

That spreads its leaves in unmolested peace,  
While every bush and tree, the country  
through,

Is shaking to the roots : indifference this  
Which may seem strange : but I was un-  
prepared

With needful knowledge, had abruptly  
passed

Into a theatre, whose stage was filled  
And busy with an action far advanced.  
Like others, I had skimmed, and some-  
times read

With care, the master pamphlets of the  
day ;

Nor wanted such half-insight as grew wild  
Upon that meagre soil, helped out by talk  
And public news ; but having never seen  
A chronicle that might suffice to show  
Whence the main organs of the public  
power

Had sprung, their transmigrations, when  
and how

Accomplished, giving thus unto events  
A form and body ; all things were to me

Loose and disjointed, and the affections left

Without a vital interest. At that time, Moreover, the first storm was overblown, And the strong hand of outward violence Locked up in quiet. For myself, I fear Now, in connection with so great a theme, To speak (as I must be compelled to do) Of one so unimportant; night by night Did I frequent the formal haunts of men, Whom, in the city, privilege of birth Sequestered from the rest, societies Polished in arts, and in punctilio versed; Whence, and from deeper causes, all discourse

Of good and evil of the time was shunned With scrupulous care; but these restrictions soon

Proved tedious, and I gradually withdrew Into a noisier world, and thus ere long Became a patriot; and my heart was all Given to the people, and my love was theirs.

A band of military Officers, Then stationed in the city, were the chief Of my associates: some of these wore swords

That had been seasoned in the wars, and all Were men well-born; the chivalry of France.

In age and temper differing, they had yet One spirit ruling in each heart; alike (Save only one, hereafter to be named) Were bent upon undoing what was done: This was their rest and only hope; there-with

No fear had they of bad becoming worse, For worst to them was come; nor would have stirred, Or deemed it worth a moment's thought to stir,

In anything, save only as the act Looked thitherward. One, reckoning by years,

Was in the prime of manhood, and ere-while

He had sate lord in many tender hearts; Though heedless of such honours now, and changed:

His temper was quite mastered by the times,

And they had blighted him, had eaten away

The beauty of his person, doing wrong Alike to body and to mind: his port, Which once had been erect and open, now Was stooping and contracted, and a face, Endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts Of symmetry and light and bloom, expressed,

As much as any that was ever seen, A ravage out of season, made by thoughts Unhealthy and vexatious. With the hour, That from the press of Paris duly brought Its freight of public news, the fever came, A punctual visitant, to shake this man, Disarmed his voice and fanned his yellow cheek

Into a thousand colours; while he read, Or mused, his sword was haunted by his touch

Continually, like an uneasy place In his own body. 'Twas in truth an hour Of universal ferment; mildest men Were agitated; and commotions, strife Of passion and opinion, filled the walls Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds.

The soil of common life was, at that time, Too hot to tread upon. Oft said I then, And not then only, "What a mockery this Of history, the past and that to come! Now do I feel how all men are deceived, Reading of nations and their works, in faith,

Faith given to vanity and emptiness; Oh! laughter for the page that would reflect

To future times the face of what now is!" The land all swarmed with passion, like a plain

Devoured by locusts,—Carra, Gorsas,—add

A hundred other names, forgotten now, Nor to be heard of more; yet, they were powers,

Like earthquakes, shocks repeated day by day,

And felt through every nook of town and field.

Such was the state of things. Meanwhile the chief

Of my associates stood prepared for flight To augment the band of emigrants in arms Upon the borders of the Rhine, and leagued

With foreign foes mustered for instant war.

This was their undisguised intent, and they  
Were waiting with the whole of their  
desires

The moment to depart.

An Englishman,  
Born in a land whose very name appeared  
To license some unruliness of mind;  
A stranger, with youth's further privilege,  
And the indulgence that a half-learn't speech  
Wins from the courteous; I, who had been  
else

Shunned and not tolerated, freely lived  
With these defenders of the Crown, and  
talked,

And heard their notions; nor did they dis-  
dain

The wish to bring me over to their cause.

But though untaught by thinking or by  
books

To reason well of polity or law,  
And nice distinctions, then on every tongue,  
Of natural rights and civil; and to acts  
Of nations and their passing interests,  
(If with unworldly ends and aims com-  
pared)

Almost indifferent, even the historian's tale  
Prizing but little otherwise than I prized  
Tales of the poets, as it made the heart  
Beat high, and filled the fancy with fair  
forms,

Old heroes and their sufferings and their  
deeds;

Yet in the regal sceptre, and the pomp  
Of orders and degrees, I nothing found  
Then, or had ever, even in crudest youth,  
That dazzled me, but rather what I mourned  
And ill could brook, beholding that the  
best

Ruled not, and feeling that they ought to  
rule.

For, born in a poor district, and which  
yet

Retaineth more of ancient homeliness,  
Than any other nook of English ground,  
It was my fortune scarcely to have seen,  
Through the whole tenor of my school-day  
time,

The face of one, who, whether boy or man,  
Was vested with attention or respect  
Through claims of wealth or blood; nor  
was it least

Of many benefits, in later years

Derived from academic institutes  
And rules, that they held something up to  
view

Of a Republic, where all stood thus far  
Upon equal ground; that we were brothers  
all

In honour, as in one community,  
Scholars and gentlemen; where, further-  
more,

Distinction open lay to all that came,  
And wealth and titles were in less esteem  
Than talents, worth, and prosperous in-  
dustry.

Add unto this, subservience from the first  
To presences of God's mysterious power  
Made manifest in Nature's sovereignty,  
And fellowship with venerable books,  
To sanction the proud workings of the soul,  
And mountain liberty. It could not be  
But that one tutored thus should look with  
awe

Upon the faculties of man, receive  
Gladly the highest promises, and hail,  
As best, the government of equal rights  
And individual worth. And hence, O  
Friend!

If at the first great outbreak I rejoiced  
Less than might well befit my youth, the  
cause

In part lay here, that unto me the events  
Seemed nothing out of nature's certain  
course,

A gift that was come rather late than soon.  
No wonder, then, if advocates like these,  
Inflamed by passion, blind with prejudice,  
And stung with injury, at this riper day,  
Were impotent to make my hopes put on  
The shape of theirs, my understanding  
bend

In honour to their honour: zeal, which yet  
Had slumbered, now in opposition burst  
Forth like a Polar summer: every word  
They uttered was a dart, by counter-winds  
Blown back upon themselves; their reason  
seemed

Confusion-stricken by a higher power  
Than human understanding, their discourse  
Maimed, spiritless; and, in their weakness  
strong,

I triumphed.

Meantime, day by day, the roads  
Were crowded with the bravest youth of  
France,

And all the promptest of her spirits, linked

In gallant soldiership, and posting on  
To meet the war upon her frontier bounds.  
Yet at this very moment do tears start  
Into mine eyes : I do not say I weep—  
I wept not then,—but tears have dimmed  
my sight,

In memory of the farewells of that time,  
Domestic severings, female fortitude  
At dearest separation, patriot love  
And self-devotion, and terrestrial hope,  
Encouraged with a martyr's confidence;  
Even files of strangers merely seen but once,  
And for a moment, men from far with  
sound

Of music, martial tunes, and banners  
spread,

Entering the city, here and there a face,  
Or person, singled out among the rest,  
Yet still a stranger and beloved as such ;  
Even by these passing spectacles my heart  
Was oftentimes uplifted, and they seemed  
Arguments sent from Heaven to prove the  
cause

Good, pure, which no one could stand up  
against,

Who was not lost, abandoned, selfish,  
proud,

Mean, miserable, wilfully depraved,  
Hater perverse of equity and truth.

Among that band of Officers was one,  
Already hinted at, of other mould—  
A patriot, thence rejected by the rest,  
And with an oriental loathing spurned,  
As of a different caste. A meeker man  
Than this lived never, nor a more benign,  
Meek though enthusiastic. Injuries  
Made *him* more gracious, and his nature  
then

Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly,  
As aromatic flowers on Alpine turf,  
When foot hath crushed them. He through  
the events

Of that great change wandered in perfect  
faith,

As through a book, an old romance, or  
tale

Of Fairy, or some dream of actions wrought  
Behind the summer clouds. By birth he  
ranked

With the most noble, but unto the poor  
Among mankind he was in service bound,  
As by some tie invisible, oaths professed  
To a religious order. Man he loved

As man ; and, to the mean and the obscure,  
And all the homely in their homely works,  
Transferred a courtesy which had no air  
Of condescension ; but did rather seem  
A passion and a gallantry, like that  
Which he, a soldier, in his idler day  
Had paid to woman : somewhat vain he was,  
Or seemed so, yet it was not vanity,  
But fondness, and a kind of radiant joy  
Diffused around him, while he was intent  
On works of love or freedom, or revolved  
Complacently the progress of a cause,  
Whereof he was a part : yet this was meek  
And placid, and took nothing from the  
man

That was delightful. Oft in solitude  
With him did I discourse about the end  
Of civil government, and its wisest forms ;  
Of ancient loyalty, and chartered rights,  
Custom and habit, novelty and change ;  
Of self-respect, and virtue in the few  
For patrimonial honour set apart,  
And ignorance in the labouring multitude.  
For he, to all intolerance indisposed,  
Balanced these contemplations in his mind ;  
And I, who at that time was scarcely dipped  
Into the turmoil, bore a sounder judgment  
Than later days allowed ; carried about me,  
With less alloy to its integrity,  
The experience of past ages, as, through  
help

Of books and common life, it makes sure  
way

To youthful minds, by objects over near  
Not pressed upon, nor dazzled or misled  
By struggling with the crowd for present  
ends.

But though not deaf, nor obstinate to find  
Error without excuse upon the side  
Of them who strove against us, more  
delight

We took, and let this freely be confessed,  
In painting to ourselves the miseries  
Of royal courts, and that voluptuous life  
Unfeeling, where the man who is of soul  
The meanest thrives the most ; where  
dignity,

True personal dignity, abideth not ;  
A light, a cruel, and vain world cut off  
From the natural inlets of just sentiment,  
From lowly sympathy and chastening truth ;  
Where good and evil interchange their  
names,

And thirst for bloody spoils abroad is  
paired  
With vice at home. We added dearest  
themes—

Man and his noble nature, as it is  
The gift which God has placed within his  
power,

His blind desires and steady faculties  
Capable of clear truth, the one to break  
Bondage, the other to build liberty  
On firm foundations, making social life,  
Through knowledge spreading and im-  
perishable,

As just in regulation, and as pure  
As individual in the wise and good.

We summoned up the honourable deeds  
Of ancient Story, thought of each bright  
spot,

That would be found in all recorded time,  
Of truth preserved and error passed away;  
Of single spirits that catch the flame from  
Heaven,

And how the multitudes of men will feed  
And fan each other; thought of sects, how  
keen

They are to put the appropriate nature on,  
Triumphant over every obstacle.

Of custom, language, country, love, or  
hate,

And what they do and suffer for their  
creed;

How far they travel, and how long endure;  
How quickly mighty Nations have been  
formed,

From least beginnings; how, together  
locked

By new opinions, scattered tribes have  
made

One body, spreading wide as clouds in  
heaven.

To aspirations then of our own minds

Did we appeal; and, finally, beheld

A living confirmation of the whole

Before us, in a people from the depth

Of shameful imbecility uprisen,

Fresh as the morning star. Elate we  
looked

Upon their virtues; saw, in rudest men,  
Self-sacrifice the firmest; generous love,  
And continence of mind, and sense of right,  
Uppermost in the midst of fiercest strife.

Oh, sweet it is, in academic groves,

Or such retirement, Friend! as we have  
known

In the green dales beside our Rotha's  
stream,

Greta, or Derwent, or some nameless rill,  
To ruminate, with interchange of talk,  
On rational liberty, and hope in man,  
Justice and peace. But far more sweet  
such toil—

Toil, say I, for it leads to thoughts ab-  
struse—

If nature then be standing on the brink  
Of some great trial, and we hear the voice  
Of one devoted,—one whom circumstance  
Hath called upon to embody his deep sense  
In action, give it outwardly a shape,  
And that of benediction, to the world.  
Then doubt is not, and truth is more than  
truth,—

A hope it is, and a desire; a creed  
Of zeal, by an authority Divine  
Sanctioned, of danger, difficulty, or death.  
Such conversation, under Attic shades,  
Did Dion hold with Plato; ripened thus  
For a Deliverer's glorious task,—and such  
He, on that ministry already bound,  
Held with Eudemus and Timonides,  
Surrounded by adventurers in arms,  
When those two vessels with their daring  
freight,

For the Sicilian Tyrant's overthrow,  
Sailed from Zacynthus,—philosophic war,  
Led by Philosophers. With harder fate,  
Though like ambition, such was he, O  
Friend!

Of whom I speak. So Beauvais (let the  
name

Stand near the worthiest of Antiquity)  
Fashioned his life; and many a long dis-  
course,

With like persuasion honoured, we main-  
tained:

He, on his part, accoutred for the worst,  
He perished fighting, in supreme command,  
Upon the borders of the unhappy Loire,  
For liberty, against deluded men,  
His fellow-countrymen; and yet most  
blessed

In this, that he the fate of later times  
Lived not to see, nor what we now behold,  
Who have as ardent hearts as he had then.

Along that very Loire, with festal mirth  
Resounding at all hours, and innocent yet

Of civil slaughter, was our frequent walk;  
Or in wide forests of continuous shade,  
Lofty and over-arched, with open space  
Beneath the trees, clear footing many a  
mile—

A solemn region. Oft amid those haunts,  
From earnest dialogues I slipped in  
thought,

And let remembrance steal to other times,  
When, o'er those interwoven roots, moss-  
clad,

And smooth as marble or a waveless sea,  
Some Hermit, from his cell forth-strayed,  
might pace

In sylvan meditation undisturbed;  
As on the pavement of a Gothic church  
Walks a lone Monk, when service hath  
expired,

In peace and silence. But if e'er was  
heard,—

Heard, though unseen,—a devious traveller,  
Retiring or approaching from afar  
With speed and echoes loud of trampling  
hoofs

From the hard floor reverberated, then  
It was Angelica thundering through the  
woods

Upon her palfrey, or that gentle maid  
Erminia, fugitive as fair as she.  
Sometimes methought I saw a pair of  
knights

Joust underneath the trees, that as in storm  
Rocked high above their heads; anon, the  
din

Of boisterous merriment, and music's roar,  
In sudden proclamation, burst from haunt  
Of Satyrs in some viewless glade, with dance  
Rejoicing o'er a female in the midst,  
A mortal beauty, their unhappy thrall.  
The width of those huge forests, unto me  
A novel scene, did often in this way  
Master my fancy while I wandered on  
With that revered companion. And some-  
times—

When to a convent in a meadow green,  
By a brook-side, we came, a roofless pile,  
And not by reverential touch of Time  
Dismantled, but by violence abrupt—  
In spite of those heart-bracing colloquies,  
In spite of real fervour, and of that  
Less genuine and wrought up within  
myself—

I could not but bewail a wrong so harsh,  
And for the *Matin*-bell to sound no more

Grieved, and the twilight taper, and the  
cross

High on the topmost pinnacle, a sign  
(How welcome to the weary traveller's  
eyes!)

Of hospitality and peaceful rest.

And when the partner of those varied  
walks

Pointed upon occasion to the site  
Of Romorentin, home of ancient kings,  
To the imperial edifice of Blois,  
Or to that rural castle, name now slipped  
From my remembrance, where a lady  
lodged,

By the first Francis wooed, and bound to  
him

In chains of mutual passion, from the  
tower,

As a tradition of the country tells,  
Practised to commune with her royal  
knight

By cressets and love-beacons, intercourse  
'Twixt her high-seated residence and his  
Far off at Chambord on the plain beneath;  
Even here, though less than with the  
peaceful house

Religious, 'mid those frequent monuments  
Of Kings, their vices and their better deeds,  
Imagination, potent to inflame  
At times with virtuous wrath and noble  
scorn,

Did also often mitigate the force  
Of civic prejudice, the bigotry,  
So call it, of a youthful patriot's mind;  
And on these spots with many gleams I  
looked

Of chivalrous delight. Yet not the less,  
Hatred of absolute rule, where will of one  
Is law for all, and of that barren pride  
In them who, by immunities unjust,  
Between the sovereign and the people stand,  
His helper and not theirs, laid stronger hold  
Daily upon me, mixed with pity too  
And love; for where hope is, there love  
will be

For the abject multitude. And when we  
chanced

One day to meet a hunger-bitten girl,  
Who crept along fitting her languid gait  
Unto a heifer's motion, by a cord  
Tied to her arm, and picking thus from  
the lane

Its sustenance, while the girl with pallid  
hands

Was busy knitting in a heartless mood  
Of solitude, and at the sight my friend  
In agitation said, "'Tis against *that*  
That we are fighting," I with him believed  
That a benignant spirit was abroad  
Which might not be withstood, that  
poverty

Abject as this would in a little time  
Be found no more, that we should see the  
earth

Unthwarted in her wish to recompense  
The meek, the lowly, patient child of toil,  
All institutes for ever blotted out  
That legalised exclusion, empty pomp  
Abolished, sensual state and cruel power  
Whether by edict of the one or few;  
And finally, as sum and crown of all,  
Should see the people having a strong  
hand

In framing their own laws; whence better  
days

To all mankind. But, these things set  
apart,

Was not this single confidence enough  
To animate the mind that ever turned  
A thought to human welfare? That hence-  
forth

Captivity by mandate without law  
Should cease; and open accusation lead  
To sentence in the hearing of the world,  
And open punishment, if not the air  
Be free to breathe in, and the heart of man  
Dread nothing. From this height I shall  
not stoop

To humbler matter that detained us oft  
In thought or conversation, public acts,  
And public persons, and emotions wrought  
Within the breast, as ever-varying winds  
Of record or report swept over us;  
But I might here, instead, repeat a tale,<sup>1</sup>  
Told by my Patriot friend, of sad events,  
That prove to what low depth had struck  
the roots,

How widely spread the boughs, of that  
old tree

Which, as a deadly mischief, and a foul  
And black dishonour, France was weary of.

Oh, happy time of youthful lovers, (thus  
The story might begin,) oh, balmy time,  
In which a love-knot, on a lady's brow,  
Is fairer than the fairest star in Heaven!  
So might—and with that prelude *did* begin

<sup>1</sup> See "Vaudracour and Julia," p. 221.

The record; and, in faithful verse, was  
given

The doleful sequel.

But our little bark

On a strong river boldly hath been  
launched;

And from the driving current should we  
turn

To loiter wilfully within a creek,  
Howe'er attractive, Fellow voyager!

Would'st thou not chide? Yet deem not  
my pains lost:

For Vaudracour and Julia (so were named  
The ill-fated pair) in that plain tale will  
draw

Tears from the hearts of others, when their  
own

Shall beat no more. Thou, also, there  
may'st read,

At leisure, how the enamoured youth was  
driven,

By public power abased, to fatal crime,  
Nature's rebellion against monstrous law;  
How, between heart and heart, oppression  
thrust

Her mandates, severing whom true love  
had joined,

Harassing both; until he sank and pressed  
The couch his fate had made for him;  
supine,

Save when the stings of viperous remorse,  
Trying their strength, enforced him to  
start up,

Aghast and prayerless. Into a deep wood  
He fled, to shun the haunts of human  
kind;

There dwelt, weakened in spirit more and  
more;

Nor could the voice of Freedom, which  
through France

Full speedily resounded, public hope,  
Or personal memory of his own worst  
wrongs,

Rouse him; but, hidden in those gloomy  
shades,

His days he wasted,—an imbecile mind.

## BOOK TENTH

### RESIDENCE IN FRANCE (*continued*)

It was a beautiful and silent day  
That overspread the countenance of earth,  
Then fading with unusual quietness,—

A day as beautiful as e'er was given  
To soothe the regret, though deepening what it  
soothed,

When by the gliding Loire I paused, and  
cast

Upon his rich domains, vineyard and tilth,  
Green meadow-ground, and many-coloured  
woods,

Again, and yet again, a farewell look ;  
Then from the quiet of that scene passed  
on,

Bound to the fierce Metropolis. From his  
throne

The King had fallen, and that invading  
host—

Presumptuous cloud, on whose black front  
was written

The tender mercies of the dismal wind  
That bore it—on the plains of Liberty  
Had burst innocuous. Say in bolder words,  
They—who had come elate as eastern  
hunters

Banded beneath the Great Mogul, when he  
Erewhile went forth from Agra or Lahore,  
Rajahs and Omrahs in his train, intent  
To drive their prey enclosed within a ring  
Wide as a province, but, the signal given,  
Before the point of the life-threatening spear  
Narrowing itself by moments—they, rash  
men,

Had seen the anticipated quarry turned  
Into avengers, from whose wrath they fled  
In terror. Disappointment and dismay  
Remained for all whose fancies had run  
wild

With evil expectations ; confidence  
And perfect triumph for the better cause.

The State—as if to stamp the final seal  
On her security, and to the world  
Show what she was, a high and fearless  
soul,

Exulting in defiance, or heart-stung  
By sharp resentment, or belike to taunt  
With spiteful gratitude the baffled League,  
That had stirred up her slackening faculties  
To a new transition—when the King was  
crushed,

Spared not the empty throne, and in proud  
haste

Assumed the body and venerable name  
Of a Republic. Lamentable crimes,  
'Tis true, had gone before this hour, dire  
work

Of massacre, in which the senseless sword  
Was prayed to as a judge ; but these were  
past,

Earth free from them for ever, as was  
thought,—

Ephemeral monsters, to be seen but once !  
Things that could only show themselves and  
die.

Cheered with this hope, to Paris I re-  
turned,

And ranged, with ardour heretofore unfelt,  
The spacious city, and in progress passed  
The prison where the unhappy Monarch  
lay,

Associate with his children and his wife  
In bondage ; and the palace, lately stormed  
With roar of cannon by a furious host.  
I crossed the square (an empty area then !)  
Of the Carrousel, where so late had lain  
The dead, upon the dying heaped, and  
gazed

On this and other spots, as doth a man  
Upon a volume whose contents he knows  
Are memorable, but from him locked up,  
Being written in a tongue he cannot read,  
So that he questions the mute leaves with  
pain,

And half upbraids their silence. But that  
night

I felt most deeply in what world I was,  
What ground I trod on, and what air I  
breathed.

High was my room and lonely, near the  
roof

Of a large mansion or hotel, a lodge  
That would have pleased me in more quiet  
times ;

Nor was it wholly without pleasure then.  
With unextinguished taper I kept watch,  
Reading at intervals ; the fear gone by  
Pressed on me almost like a fear to come.  
I thought of those September massacres,  
Divided from me by one little month,  
Saw them and touched : the rest was con-  
jured up

From tragic fictions or true history,  
Remembrances and dim admonishments.  
The horse is taught his manage, and no  
star

Of wildest course but treads back his own  
steps ;

For the spent hurricane the air provides  
As fierce a successor ; the tide retreats



But to return out of its hiding-place  
In the great deep; all things have second  
birth;

The earthquake is not satisfied at once;  
And in this way I wrought upon myself,  
Until I seemed to hear a voice that cried,  
To the whole city, "Sleep no more." The  
trance

Fled with the voice to which it had given  
birth;

But vainly comments of a calmer mind  
Promised soft peace and sweet forgetfulness.  
The place, all hushed and silent as it was,  
Appeared unfit for the repose of night,  
Defenceless as a wood where tigers roam.

With early morning towards the Palace-  
walk

Of Orleans eagerly I turned: as yet  
The streets were still; not so those long  
Arcades;

There, 'mid a peal of ill-matched sounds  
and cries,

That greeted me on entering, I could hear  
Shrill voices from the hawkers in the throng,  
Bawling, "Denunciation of the Crimes  
Of Maximilian Robespierre;" the hand,  
Prompt as the voice, held forth a printed  
speech,

The same that had been recently pro-  
nounced,

When Robespierre, not ignorant for what  
mark

Some words of indirect reproof had been  
Intended, rose in hardihood, and dared  
The man who had an ill surmise of him  
To bring his charge in openness; whereat,  
When a dead pause ensued, and no one  
stirred,

In silence of all present, from his seat  
Louvvet walked single through the avenue,  
And took his station in the Tribune, saying,  
"I, Robespierre, accuse thee!" Well is  
known

The inglorious issue of that charge, and how  
He, who had launched the startling thunder-  
bolt,

The one bold man, whose voice the attack  
had sounded,

Was left without a follower to discharge  
His perilous duty, and retire lamenting  
That Heaven's best aid is wasted upon men  
Who to themselves are false.

But these are things

Of which I speak, only as they were storm  
Or sunshine to my individual mind,  
No further. Let me then relate that now—  
In some sort seeing with my proper eyes  
That Liberty, and Life, and Death, would  
soon

To the remotest corners of the land  
Lie in the arbitrement of those who ruled  
The capital City; what was struggled for,  
And by what combatants victory must be  
won;

The indecision on their part whose aim  
Seemed best, and the straightforward path  
of those

Who in attack or in defence were strong  
Through their impiety—my inmost soul  
Was agitated; yea, I could almost  
Have prayed that throughout earth upon all  
men,

By patient exercise of reason made  
Worthy of liberty, all spirits filled  
With zeal expanding in Truth's holy light,  
The gift of tongues might fall, and power  
arrive

From the four quarters of the winds to do  
For France, what without help she could  
not do,

A work of honour; think not that to this  
I added, work of safety: from all doubt  
Or trepidation for the end of things  
Far was I, far as angels are from guilt.

Yet did I grieve, nor only grieved, but  
thought

Of opposition and of remedies:  
An insignificant stranger and obscure,  
And one, moreover, little graced with power  
Of eloquence even in my native speech,  
And all unfit for tumult or intrigue,  
Yet would I at this time with willing heart  
Have undertaken for a cause so great  
Service however dangerous. I revolved,  
How much the destiny of Man had still  
Hung upon single persons; that there was,  
Transcendent to all local patrimony,  
One nature, as there is one sun in heaven;  
That objects, even as they are great, there-  
by

Do come within the reach of humblest eyes;  
That Man is only weak through his mistrust  
And want of hope where evidence divine  
Proclaims to him that hope should be most  
sure;

Nor did the inexperience of my youth

Preclude conviction, that a spirit strong  
 In hope, and trained to noble aspirations,  
 A spirit thoroughly faithful to itself,  
 Is for Society's unreasoning herd  
 A domineering instinct, serves at once  
 For way and guide, a fluent receptacle  
 That gathers up each petty straggling rill  
 And vein of water, glad to be rolled on  
 In safe obedience; that a mind, whose rest  
 Is where it ought to be, in self-restraint,  
 In circumspection and simplicity,  
 Falls rarely in entire discomfiture  
 Below its aim, or meets with, from without,  
 A treachery that foils it or defeats;  
 And, lastly, if the means on human will,  
 Frail human will, dependent should betray  
 Him who too boldly trusted them, I felt  
 That 'mid the loud distractions of the world  
 A sovereign voice subsists within the soul,  
 Arbiter undisturbed of right and wrong,  
 Of life and death, in majesty severe  
 Enjoining, as may best promote the aims  
 Of truth and justice, either sacrifice,  
 From whatsoever region of our cares  
 Or our infirm affections Nature pleads,  
 Earnest and blind, against the stern decree.

On the other side, I called to mind those  
 truths  
 That are the commonplaces of the schools—  
 (A theme for boys, too hackneyed for their  
 sires,)  
 Yet, with a revelation's liveliness,  
 In all their comprehensive bearings known  
 And visible to philosophers of old,  
 Men who, to business of the world un-  
 trained,  
 Lived in the shade; and to Harmodius  
 known  
 And his compeer Aristogiton, known  
 To Brutus—that tyrannic power is weak,  
 Hath neither gratitude, nor faith, nor love,  
 Nor the support of good or evil men  
 To trust in; that the godhead which is ours  
 Can never utterly be charmed or stilled;  
 That nothing hath a natural right to last  
 But equity and reason; that all else  
 Meets foes irreconcilable, and at best  
 Lives only by variety of disease.

Well might my wishes be intense, my  
 thoughts  
 Strong and perturbed, not doubting at that  
 time

But that the virtue of one paramount mind  
 Would have abashed those impious crests  
 —have quelled

Outrage and bloody power, and—in despite  
 Of what the People long had been and were  
 Through ignorance and false teaching,  
 sadder proof

Of immaturity, and—in the teeth  
 Of desperate opposition from without—  
 Have cleared a passage for just govern-  
 ment,

And left a solid birthright to the State,  
 Redeemed, according to example given  
 By ancient lawgivers.

In this frame of mind,  
 Dragged by a chain of harsh necessity,  
 So seemed it,—now I thankfully acknow-  
 ledge,

Forced by the gracious providence of  
 Heaven,—

To England I returned, else (though as-  
 sured

That I both was and must be of small  
 weight,

No better than a landsman on the deck  
 Of a ship struggling with a hideous storm).  
 Doubtless, I should have then made com-  
 mon cause

With some who perished; haply perished  
 too,

A poor mistaken and bewildered offering,—  
 Should to the breast of Nature have gone  
 back,

With all my resolutions, all my hopes,  
 A Poet only to myself, to men  
 Useless, and even, beloved Friend! a soul  
 To thee unknown!

Twice had the trees let fall  
 Their leaves, as often Winter had put on  
 His hoary crown, since I had seen the surge  
 Beat against Albion's shore, since ear of  
 mine

Had caught the accents of my native speech  
 Upon our native country's sacred ground.  
 A patriot of the world, how could I glide  
 Into communion with her sylvan shades,  
 Erewhile my tuneful haunt? It pleased  
 me more

To abide in the great City, where I found  
 The general air still busy with the stir  
 Of that first memorable onset made  
 By a strong levy of humanity  
 Upon the traffickers in Negro blood;  
 Effort which, though defeated, had recalled

To notice old forgotten principles,  
And through the nation spread a novel heat  
Of virtuous feeling. For myself, I own  
That this particular strife had wanted power  
To rivet my affections ; nor did now  
Its unsuccessful issue much excite  
My sorrow ; for I brought with me the  
faith

That, if France prospered, good men would  
not long

Pay fruitless worship to humanity,  
And this most rotten branch of human  
shame,

Object, so seemed it, of superfluous pains  
Would fall together with its parent tree.  
What, then, were my emotions, when in  
arms

Britain put forth her free-born strength in  
league,

Oh, pity and shame ! with those confeder-  
ate Powers !

Not in my single self alone I found,  
But in the minds of all ingenuous youth,  
Change and subversion from that hour.

No shock

Given to my moral nature had I known  
Down to that very moment ; neither lapse  
Nor turn of sentiment that might be named  
A revolution, save at this one time ;  
All else was progress on the self-same path  
On which, with a diversity of pace,  
I had been travelling : this a stride at once  
Into another region. As a light  
And pliant harebell, swinging in the breeze  
On some grey rock—its birth-place—so  
had I

Wanted, fast rooted on the ancient tower  
Of my beloved country, wishing not  
A happier fortune than to wither there :  
Now was I from that pleasant station torn  
And tossed about in whirlwind. I rejoiced,  
Yea, afterwards—truth most painful to  
record !—

Exulted, in the triumph of my soul,  
When Englishmen by thousands were o'er-  
thrown,

Left without glory on the field, or driven,  
Brave hearts ! to shameful flight. It was  
a grief,—

Grief call it not, 'twas anything but that,—  
A conflict of sensations without name,  
Of which *he* only, who may love the sight  
Of a village steeple, as I do, can judge,  
When, in the congregation bending all

To their great Father, prayers were offered  
up,

Or praises for our country's victories ;  
And, 'mid the simple worshippers, per-  
chance

I only, like an uninvited guest  
Whom no one owned, sate silent, shall I  
add,

Fed on the day of vengeance yet to come.

Oh ! much have they to account for, who  
could tear,

By violence, at one decisive rent,  
From the best youth in England their dear  
pride,

Their joy, in England ; this, too, at a time  
In which worst losses easily might wean  
The best of names, when patriotic love  
Did of itself in modesty give way,

Like the Precursor when the Deity  
Is come Whose harbinger he was ; a time  
In which apostasy from ancient faith  
Seemed but conversion to a higher creed ;  
Withal a season dangerous and wild,  
A time when sage Experience would have  
snatched

Flowers out of any hedge-row to compose  
A chaplet in contempt of his grey locks.

When the proud fleet that bears the red-  
cross flag

In that unworthy service was prepared  
To mingle, I beheld the vessels lie,  
A brood of gallant creatures, on the deep ;  
I saw them in their rest, a sojourner  
Through a whole month of calm and glassy  
days

In that delightful island which protects  
Their place of convocation—there I heard,  
Each evening, pacing by the still sea-shore,  
A monitory sound that never failed,—  
The sunset cannon. While the orb went  
down

In the tranquillity of nature, came  
That voice, ill requiem ! seldom heard by  
me

Without a spirit overcast by dark  
Imaginations, sense of woes to come,  
Sorrow for human kind, and pain of heart.

In France, the men, who, for their  
desperate ends,  
Had plucked up mercy by the roots, were  
glad

Of this new enemy. Tyrants, strong before  
In wicked pleas, were strong as demons  
now;

And thus, on every side beset with foes,  
The goaded land waxed mad; the crimes  
of few

Spread into madness of the many; blasts  
From hell came sanctified like airs from  
heaven.

The sternness of the just, the faith of those  
Who doubted not that Providence had  
times

Of vengeful retribution, theirs who throned  
The human Understanding paramount  
And made of that their God, the hopes of  
men

Who were content to barter short-lived  
pangs

For a paradise of ages, the blind rage  
Of insolent tempers, the light vanity  
Of intermeddlers, steady purposes  
Of the suspicious, slips of the indiscreet,  
And all the accidents of life—were pressed  
Into one service, busy with one work.

The Senate stood aghast, her prudence  
quenched,

Her wisdom stifled, and her justice scared,  
Her frenzy only active to extol  
Past outrages, and shape the way for new,  
Which no one dared to oppose or mitigate.

Domestic carnage now filled the whole  
year

With feast-days; old men from the chimney-  
nook,

The maiden from the bosom of her love,  
The mother from the cradle of her babe,  
The warrior from the field—all perished,  
all—

Friends, enemies, of all parties, ages, ranks,  
Head after head, and never heads enough  
For those that bade them fall. They found  
their joy,

They made it proudly, eager as a child,  
(If like desires of innocent little ones  
May with such heinous appetites be com-  
pared),

Pleased in some open field to exercise  
A toy that mimics with revolving wings  
The motion of a wind-mill; though the air  
Do of itself blow fresh, and make the vanes  
Spin in his eyesight, *that* contents him not,  
But with the plaything at arm's length, he  
sets

His front against the blast, and runs amain,  
That it may whirl the faster.

Amid the depth  
Of those enormities, even thinking minds  
Forgot, at seasons, whence they had their  
being

Forgot that such a sound was ever heard  
As Liberty upon earth: yet all beneath  
Her innocent authority was wrought,  
Nor could have been, without her blessed  
name.

The illustrious wife of Roland, in the hour  
Of her composure, felt that agony,  
And gave it vent in her last words. O  
Friend!

It was a lamentable time for man,  
Whether a hope had e'er been his or not:  
A woful time for them whose hopes survived  
The shock; most woful for those few who  
still

Were flattered, and had trust in human  
kind:

They had the deepest feeling of the grief.  
Meanwhile the Invaders fared as they  
deserved:

The Herculean Commonwealth had put  
forth her arms,

And throttled with an infant godhead's  
might

The snakes about her cradle; that was well,  
And as it should be; yet no cure for them  
Whose souls were sick with pain of what  
would be

Hereafter brought in charge against man-  
kind.

Most melancholy at that time, O Friend!  
Were my day-thoughts,—my nights were  
miserable;

Through months, through years, long after  
the last beat

Of those atrocities, the hour of sleep  
To me came rarely charged with natural  
gifts,

Such ghastly visions had I of despair  
And tyranny, and implements of death;  
And innocent victims sinking under fear,  
And momentary hope, and worn-out prayer,  
Each in his separate cell, or penned in crowds  
For sacrifice, and struggling with fond mirth  
And levity in dungeons, where the dust  
Was laid with tears. Then suddenly the  
scene

Changed, and the unbroken dream entangled  
me

In long orations, which I strove to plead  
Before unjust tribunals,—with a voice  
Labouring, a brain confounded, and a  
sense,  
Death-like, of treacherous desertion, felt  
In the last place of refuge—my own soul.

When I began in youth's delightful prime  
To yield myself to Nature, when that strong  
And holy passion overcame me first,  
Nor day nor night, evening or morn, was  
free

From its oppression. But, O Power  
Supreme !

Without Whose call this world would cease  
to breathe

Who from the fountain of Thy grace dost  
fill

The veins that branch through every frame  
of life,

Making man what he is, creature divine,  
In single or in social eminence,  
Above the rest raised infinite ascents  
When reason that enables him to be  
Is not sequestered—what a change is here !  
How different ritual for this after-worship,  
What countenance to promote this second  
love !

The first was service paid to things which  
lie

Guarded within the bosom of Thy will.  
Therefore to serve was high beatitude ;  
Tumult was therefore gladness, and the fear  
Ennobling, venerable ; sleep secure,  
And waking thoughts more rich than happiest  
dreams.

But as the ancient Prophets, borne aloft  
In vision, yet constrained by natural laws  
With them to take a troubled human heart,  
Wanted not consolations, nor a creed  
Of reconciliation, then when they denounced,  
On towns and cities, wallowing in the abyss  
Of their offences, punishment to come ;  
Or saw, like other men, with bodily eyes,  
Before them, in some desolated place,  
The wrath consummate and the threat  
fulfilled ;

So, with devout humility be it said,  
So, did a portion of that spirit fall  
On me uplifted from the vantage-ground  
Of pity and sorrow to a state of being  
That through the time's exceeding fierceness  
saw

Glimpses of retribution, terrible,  
And in the order of sublime behests :  
But, even if that were not, amid the awe  
Of unintelligible chastisement,  
Not only acquiescences of faith  
Survived, but daring sympathies with power,  
Motions not treacherous or profane, else  
why

Within the folds of no ungentle breast  
Their dread vibration to this hour prolonged ?  
Wild blasts of music thus could find their  
way

Into the midst of turbulent events ;  
So that worst tempests might be listened to.  
Then was the truth received into my heart,  
That, under heaviest sorrow earth can bring,  
If from the affliction somewhere do not grow  
Honour which could not else have been, a  
faith,

An elevation, and a sanctity,  
If newstrength be not given nor old restored,  
The blame is ours, not Nature's. When a  
taunt

Was taken up by scoffers in their pride,  
Saying, " Behold the harvest that we reap  
From popular government and equality,"  
I clearly saw that neither these nor aught  
Of wild belief engrafted on their names  
By false philosophy had caused the woe,  
But a terrific reservoir of guilt  
And ignorance filled up from age to age,  
That could no longer hold its loathsome  
charge,

But burst and spread in deluge through the  
land.

And as the desert hath green spots, the  
sea

Small islands scattered amid stormy waves,  
So *that* disastrous period did not want  
Bright sprinklings of all human excellence,  
To which the silver wands of saints in  
Heaven

Might point with rapturous joy. Yet not  
the less,

For those examples, in no age surpassed,  
Of fortitude and energy and love,  
And human nature faithful to herself  
Under worst trials, was I driven to think  
Of the glad times when first I traversed  
France

A youthful pilgrim ; above all reviewed  
That eventide, when under windows bright  
With happy faces and with garlands hung,

And through a rainbow-arch that spanned  
the street,  
Triumphal pomp for liberty confirmed,  
I paced, a dear companion at my side,  
The town of Arras, whence with promise  
high  
Issued, on delegation to sustain  
Humanity and right, *that* Robespierre,  
He who thereafter, and in how short time !  
Wielded the sceptre of the Atheist crew.  
When the calamity spread far and wide—  
And this same city, that did then appear  
To outrun the rest in exultation, groaned  
Under the vengeance of her cruel son,  
As Lear reproached the winds—I could  
almost  
Have quarrelled with that blameless spec-  
tacle  
For lingering yet an image in my mind  
To mock me under such a strange reverse.

O Friend ! few happier moments have  
been mine  
Than that which told the downfall of this  
Tribe  
So dreaded, so abhorred. The day deserves  
A separate record. Over the smooth sands  
Of Leven's ample estuary lay  
My journey, and beneath a genial sun,  
With distant prospect among gleams of sky  
And clouds and intermingling mountain  
tops,  
In one inseparable glory clad,  
Creatures of one ethereal substance met  
In consistory, like a diadem  
Or crown of burning seraphs as they sit  
In the empyrean. Underneath that pomp  
Celestial, lay unseen the pastoral vales  
Among whose happy fields I had grown up  
From childhood. On the fulgent spectacle,  
That neither passed away nor changed, I  
gazed  
Enrapt ; but brightest things are wont to  
draw  
Sad opposites out of the inner heart,  
As even their pensive influence drew from  
mine.  
How could it otherwise ? for not in vain  
That very morning had I turned aside  
To seek the ground where, 'mid a throng  
of graves,  
An honoured teacher of my youth was laid,  
And on the stone were graven by his desire  
Lines from the churchyard elegy of Gray.

This faithful guide, speaking from his death-  
bed,  
Added no farewell to his parting counsel,  
But said to me, " My head will soon lie  
low ; "  
And when I saw the turf that covered him,  
After the lapse of full eight years, those  
words,  
With sound of voice and countenance of  
the Man,  
Came back upon me, so that some few tears  
Fell from me in my own despite. But now  
I thought, still traversing that widespread  
plain,  
With tender pleasure of the verses graven  
Upon his tombstone, whispering to myself :  
He loved the Poets, and, if now alive,  
Would have loved me, as one not destitute  
Of promise, nor belying the kind hope  
That he had formed, when I, at his command,  
Began to spin, with toil, my earliest songs.

As I advanced, all that I saw or felt  
Was gentleness and peace. Upon a small  
And rocky island near, a fragment stood,  
(Itself like a sea rock) the low remains  
(With shells encrusted, dark with briny  
weeds)  
Of a dilapidated structure, once  
A Romish chapel, where the vested priest  
Said matins at the hour that suited those  
Who crossed the sands with ebb of morning  
tide.  
Not far from that still ruin all the plain  
Lay spotted with a variegated crowd  
Of vehicles and travellers, horse and foot,  
Wading beneath the conduct of their guide  
In loose procession through the shallow  
stream  
Of inland waters ; the great sea meanwhile  
Heaved at safe distance, far retired. I  
paused,  
Longing for skill to paint a scene so bright  
And cheerful, but the foremost of the band  
As he approached, no salutation given  
In the familiar language of the day,  
Cried, " Robespierre is dead ! " nor was a  
doubt,  
After strict question, left within my mind  
That he and his supporters all were fallen.

Great was my transport, deep my grati-  
tude  
To everlasting Justice, by this fiat

Made manifest. "Come now, ye golden times,"  
 Said I forth-pouring on those open sands  
 A hymn of triumph: "as the morning comes  
 From out the bosom of the night, come ye:  
 Thus far our trust is verified; behold!  
 They who with clumsy desperation brought  
 A river of Blood, and preached that nothing else  
 Could cleanse the Augean stable, by the might  
 Of their own helper have been swept away;  
 Their madness stands declared and visible;  
 Elsewhere will safety now be sought, and earth  
 March firmly towards righteousness and peace."—  
 Then schemes I framed more calmly, when and how  
 The madding factions might be tranquillised,  
 And how through hardships manifold and long  
 The glorious renovation would proceed.  
 Thus interrupted by uneasy bursts  
 Of exultation, I pursued my way  
 Along that very shore which I had skimmed  
 In former days, when—spurring from the Vale  
 Of Nightshade, and St. Mary's mouldering fane,  
 And the stone abbot, after circuit made  
 In wantonness of heart, a joyous band  
 Of schoolboys hastening to their distant home  
 Along the margin of the moonlight sea—  
 We beat with thundering hoofs the level sand.

## BOOK ELEVENTH

FRANCE (*concluded*)

FROM that time forth, Authority in France  
 Put on a milder face; Terror had ceased,  
 Yet everything was wanting that might give  
 Courage to them who looked for good by light  
 Of rational Experience, for the shoots  
 And hopeful blossoms of a second spring:  
 Yet, in me, confidence was unimpaired;  
 The Senate's language, and the public acts

And measures of the Government, though both  
 Weak, and of heartless omen, had not power  
 To daunt me; in the People was my trust:  
 And, in the virtues which mine eyes had seen,  
 I knew that wound external could not take  
 Life from the young Republic; that new foes  
 Would only follow, in the path of shame,  
 Their brethren, and her triumphs be in the end  
 Great, universal, irresistible.  
 This intuition led me to confound  
 One victory with another, higher far,—  
 Triumphs of unambitious peace at home,  
 And noiseless fortitude. Beholding still  
 Resistance strong as heretofore, I thought  
 That what was in degree the same was likewise  
 The same in quality,—that, as the worse  
 Of the two spirits then at strife remained  
 Untired, the better, surely, would preserve  
 The heart that first had roused him. Youth maintains,  
 In all conditions of society,  
 Communion more direct and intimate  
 With Nature,—hence, oftentimes, with reason too—  
 Than age or manhood, even. To Nature, then,  
 Power had reverted: habit, custom, law,  
 Had left an interregnum's open space  
 For *her* to move about in, uncontrolled.  
 Hence could I see how Babel-like their task,  
 Who, by the recent deluge stupified,  
 With their whole souls went culling from the day  
 Its petty promises, to build a tower  
 For their own safety; laughed with my compeers  
 At gravest heads, by enmity to France  
 Distempered, till they found, in every blast  
 Forced from the street-disturbing news-  
 man's horn,  
 For her great cause record or prophecy  
 Of utter ruin. How might we believe  
 That wisdom could, in any shape, come near  
 Men clinging to delusions so insane?  
 And thus, experience proving that no few  
 Of our opinions had been just, we took  
 Like credit to ourselves where less was due,

And thought that other notions were as  
sound

Yea, could not but be right, because we  
saw

That foolish men opposed them.

To a strain  
More animated I might here give way,  
And tell, since juvenile errors are my theme,  
What in those days, through Britain, was  
performed

To turn *all* judgments out of their right  
course;

But this is passion over-near ourselves,  
Reality too close and too intense,  
And intermixed with something, in my mind,  
Of scorn and condemnation personal,  
That would profane the sanctity of verse.  
Our Shepherds, this say merely, at that time  
Acted, or seemed at least to act, like men  
Thirsting to make the guardian crook of  
law

A tool of murder; they who ruled the  
State—

Though with such awful proof before their  
eyes

That he, who would sow death, reaps death,  
or worse,

And can reap nothing better—child-like  
longed

To imitate, not wise enough to avoid;  
Or left (by mere timidity betrayed)

The plain straight road, for one no better  
chosen

Than if their wish had been to undermine  
Justice, and make an end of Liberty.

But from these bitter truths I must return  
To my own history. It hath been told  
That I was led to take an eager part  
In arguments of civil polity,  
Abruptly, and indeed before my time:  
I had approached, like other youths, the  
shield

Of human nature from the golden side,  
And would have fought, even to the death,  
to attest

The quality of the metal which I saw.  
What there is best in individual man,  
Of wise in passion, and sublime in power,  
Benevolent in small societies,  
And great in large ones, I had oft revolved,  
Felt deeply, but not thoroughly understood  
By reason: nay, far from it; they were yet,  
As cause was given me afterwards to learn,

Not proof against the injuries of the day;  
Lodged only at the sanctuary's door,  
Not safe within its bosom. Thus prepared,  
And with such general insight into evil,  
And of the bounds which sever it from  
good,

As books and common intercourse with life  
Must needs have given—to the inexperienced  
mind,

When the world travels in a beaten road,  
Guide faithful as is needed—I began  
To meditate with ardour on the rule  
And management of nations; what it is  
And ought to be; and strove to learn how  
far

Their power or weakness, wealth or poverty,  
Their happiness or misery, depends  
Upon their laws, and fashion of the State.

<sup>1</sup> O pleasant exercise of hope and joy!  
For mighty were the auxiliars which then  
stood

Upon our side, us who were strong in love!  
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very Heaven! O  
times,

In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways  
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once  
The attraction of a country in romance!  
When Reason seemed the most to assert  
her rights

When most intent on making of herself  
A prime enchantress—to assist the work,  
Which then was going forward in her name!  
Not favoured spots alone, but the whole  
Earth,

The beauty wore of promise—that which  
sets

(As at some moments might not be unfelt  
Among the bowers of Paradise itself)  
The budding rose above the rose full blown.  
What temper at the prospect did not wake  
To happiness unthought of? The inert  
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!  
They who had fed their childhood upon  
dreams,

The play-fellows of fancy, who had made  
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength  
Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had  
stirred

Among the grandest objects of the sense,  
And dealt with whatsoever they found there  
As if they had within some lurking right

<sup>1</sup> See p. 234.



To wield it;—they, too, who of gentle mood  
Had watched all gentle motions, and to  
these

Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers  
more mild,

And in the region of their peaceful selves;—  
Now was it that *both* found, the meek and  
lofty

Did both find, helpers to their hearts' desire,  
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could  
wish,—

Were called upon to exercise their skill,  
Not in Utopia,—subterranean fields,—  
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows  
where!

But in the very world, which is the world  
Of all of us,—the place where, in the end,  
We find our happiness, or not at all!

Why should I not confess that Earth was  
then

To me, what an inheritance, new-fallen,  
Seems, when the first time visited, to one  
Who thither comes to find in it his home?  
He walks about and looks upon the spot  
With cordial transport, moulds it and  
remoulds,

And is half-pleased with things that are  
amiss,

'Twill be such joy to see them disappear.

An active partisan, I thus convoked  
From every object pleasant circumstance  
To suit my ends; I moved among man-  
kind

With genial feelings still predominant;  
When erring, erring on the better part,  
And in the kinder spirit; placable,  
Indulgent, as not uninformed that men  
See as they have been taught—Antiquity  
Gives rights to error; and aware, no less  
That throwing off oppression must be work  
As well of License as of Liberty;  
And above all—for this was more than  
all—

Not caring if the wind did now and then  
Blow keen upon an eminence that gave  
Prospect so large into futurity;  
In brief, a child of Nature, as at first,  
Diffusing only those affections wider  
That from the cradle had grown up with  
me,

And losing, in no other way than light  
Is lost in light, the weak in the more strong.

In the main outline, such it might be  
said

Was my condition, till with open war  
Britain opposed the liberties of France.  
This threw me first out of the pale of love;  
Soured and corrupted, upwards to the  
source,

My sentiments; was not, as hitherto,  
A swallowing up of lesser things in great,  
But change of them into their contraries;  
And thus a way was opened for mistakes  
And false conclusions, in degree as gross,  
In kind more dangerous. What had been  
a pride,

Was now a shame; my likings and my  
loves

Ran in new channels, leaving old ones dry;  
And hence a blow that, in maturer age,  
Would but have touched the judgment,  
struck more deep

Into sensations near the heart: meantime,  
As from the first, wild theories were afloat,  
To whose pretensions, sedulously urged,  
I had but lent a careless ear, assured  
That time was ready to set all things right,  
And that the multitude, so long oppressed,  
Would be oppressed no more.

But when events  
Brought less encouragement, and unto  
these

The immediate proof of principles no more  
Could be entrusted, while the events them-  
selves,

Worn out in greatness, stripped of novelty,  
Less occupied the mind, and sentiments  
Could through my understanding's natural  
growth

No longer keep their ground, by faith  
maintained

Of inward consciousness, and hope that  
laid

Her hand upon her object—evidence  
Safer, of universal application, such  
As could not be impeached, was sought  
elsewhere.

But now, become oppressors in their turn,  
Frenchmen had changed a war of self-  
defence

For one of conquest, losing sight of all  
Which they had struggled for: up mounted  
now,

Openly in the eye of earth and heaven,  
The scale of liberty. I read her doom,

With anger vexed, with disappointment  
sore,

But not dismayed, nor taking to the shame  
Of a false prophet. While resentment  
rose

Striving to hide, what nought could heal,  
the wounds

Of mortified presumption, I adhered  
More firmly to old tenets, and, to prove  
Their temper, strained them more; and  
thus, in heat

Of contest, did opinions every day  
Grow into consequence, till round my mind  
They clung, as if they were its life, nay  
more,

The very being of the immortal soul.

This was the time, when, all things  
tending fast

To depravation, speculative schemes—  
That promised to abstract the hopes of  
Man

Out of his feelings, to be fixed thenceforth  
For ever in a purer element—

Found ready welcome. Tempting region  
*that*

For Zeal to enter and refresh herself,  
Where passions had the privilege to work,  
And never hear the sound of their own  
names.

But, speaking more in charity, the dream  
Flattered the young, pleased with extremes,  
nor least

With that which makes our Reason's naked  
self

The object of its fervour. What delight!  
How glorious! in self-knowledge and self-  
rule,

To look through all the frailties of the  
world,

And, with a resolute mastery shaking off  
Infirmities of nature, time, and place,  
Build social upon personal Liberty,  
Which, to the blind restraints of general  
laws,

Superior, magisterially adopts  
One guide, the light of circumstances,  
flashed

Upon an independent intellect.  
Thus expectation rose again; thus hope,  
From her first ground expelled, grew proud  
once more.

Oft, as my thoughts were turned to human  
kind,

I scorned indifference; but, inflamed with  
thirst

Of a secure intelligence, and sick  
Of other longing, I pursued what seemed  
A more exalted nature; wished that Man  
Should start out of his earthy, worm-like  
state,

And spread abroad the wings of Liberty,  
Lord of himself, in undisturbed delight—  
A noble aspiration! *yet* I feel  
(Sustained by worthier as by wiser thoughts)  
The aspiration, nor shall ever cease  
To feel it;—but return we to our course.

Enough, 'tis true—could such a plea  
excuse

Those aberrations—had the clamorous  
friends

Of ancient Institutions said and done  
To bring disgrace upon their very names;  
Disgrace, of which, custom and written  
law,

And sundry moral sentiments as props  
Or emanations of those institutes,  
Too justly bore a part. A veil had been  
Uplifted; why deceive ourselves? in sooth,  
'Twas even so; and sorrow for the man  
Who either had not eyes wherewith to see,  
Or, seeing, had forgotten! A strong  
shock

Was given to old opinions; all men's minds  
Had felt its power, and mine was both let  
loose,

Let loose and goaded. After what hath  
been

Already said of patriotic love,  
Suffice it here to add, that, somewhat stern  
In temperament, withal a happy man,  
And therefore bold to look on painful  
things,

Free likewise of the world, and thence more  
bold,

I summoned my best skill, and toiled,  
intent

To anatomise the frame of social life;  
Yea, the whole body of society  
Searched to its heart. Share with me,  
Friend! the wish

That some dramatic tale, endowed with  
shapes

Livelier, and flinging out less guarded  
words

Than suit the work we fashion, might set  
forth

What then I learned, or think I learned,  
of truth,

And the errors into which I fell, betrayed  
By present objects, and by reasonings false  
From their beginnings, inasmuch as drawn  
Out of a heart that had been turned aside  
From Nature's way by outward accidents,  
And which was thus confounded, more and  
more

Misguided, and misguiding. So I fared,  
Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims,  
creeds,

Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,  
Suspiciously, to establish in plain day  
Her titles and her honours; now believing,  
Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed  
With impulse, motive, right and wrong,  
the ground

Of obligation, what the rule and whence  
The sanction; till, demanding formal *proof*,  
And seeking it in every thing, I lost  
All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,  
Sick, wearied out with contrarieties,  
Yielded up moral questions in despair.

This was the crisis of that strong disease,  
This the soul's last and lowest ebb; I  
drooped,

Deeming our blessed reason of least use  
Where wanted most: "The lordly attri-  
butes

Of will and choice," I bitterly exclaimed  
"What are they but a mockery of a Being  
Who hath in no concerns of his a test  
Of good and evil; knows not what to fear  
Or hope for, what to covet or to shun;  
And who, if those could be discerned,  
would yet

Be little profited, would see, and ask  
Where is the obligation to enforce?  
And, to acknowledged law rebellious, still,  
As selfish passion urged, would act amiss;  
The dupe of folly, or the slave of crime."

Depressed, bewildered thus, I did not  
walk

With scoffers, seeking light and gay re-  
venge

From indiscriminate laughter, nor sate down  
In reconcement with an utter waste  
Of intellect; such sloth I could not brook,  
(Too well I loved, in that my spring of life,  
Pains-taking thoughts, and truth, their  
dear reward)

But turned to abstract science, and there  
sought

Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned  
Where the disturbances of space and time—  
Whether in matters various, properties  
Inherent, or from human will and power  
Derived—find no admission. Then it  
was—

Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all  
good!—

That the beloved Sister in whose sight  
Those days were passed, now speaking in  
a voice

Of sudden admonition—like a brook  
That did but *cross* a lonely road, and now  
Is seen, heard, felt, and caught at every  
turn,

Companion never lost through many a  
league—

Maintained for me a saving intercourse  
With my true self; for, though bedimmed  
and changed

Much, as it seemed, I was no further  
changed

Than as a clouded and a waning moon:  
She whispered still that brightness would  
return;

She, in the midst of all, preserved me still  
A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,  
And that alone, my office upon earth;  
And, lastly, as hereafter will be shown,  
If willing audience fail not, Nature's self,  
By all varieties of human love  
Assisted, led me back through opening day  
To those sweet counsels between head and  
heart

Whence grew that genuine knowledge,  
fraught with peace,

Which, through the later sinkings of this  
cause,

Hath still upheld me, and upholds me now  
In the catastrophe (for so they dream,  
And nothing less), when, finally to close  
And seal up all the gains of France, a  
Pope

Is summoned in, to crown an Emperor—  
This last opprobrium, when we see a people,  
That once looked up in faith, as if to Heaven  
For manna, take a lesson from the dog  
Returning to his vomit; when the sun  
That rose in splendour, was alive, and  
moved

In exultation with a living pomp  
Of clouds—his glory's natural retinue—

Hath dropped all functions by the gods  
bestowed,  
And, turned into a gewgaw, a machine,  
Sets like an Opera phantom.

Thus, O Friend !

Through times of honour and through times  
of shame

Descending, have I faithfully retraced  
The perturbations of a youthful mind  
Under a long-lived storm of great events—  
A story destined for thy ear, who now,  
Among the fallen of nations, dost abide  
Where Etna, over hill and valley, casts  
His shadow stretching towards Syracuse,  
The city of Timoleon ! Righteous Heaven !  
How are the mighty prostrated ! They first,  
They first of all that breathe should have  
awaked

When the great voice was heard from out  
the tombs

Of ancient heroes. If I suffered grief  
For ill-requited France, by many deemed  
A trifier only in her proudest day ;  
Have been distressed to think of what she  
once

Promised, now is ; a far more sober cause  
Thine eyes must see of sorrow in a land,  
To the reanimating influence lost  
Of memory, to virtue lost and hope,  
Though with the wreck of loftier years  
bestrewn.

But indignation works where hope is not,  
And thou, O Friend ! wilt be refreshed.  
There is

One great society alone on earth :  
The noble Living and the noble Dead.

Thine be such converse strong and  
sanative,

A ladder for thy spirit to reascend  
To health and joy and pure contentedness ;  
To me the grief confined, that thou art  
gone

From this last spot of earth, where Freedom  
now

Stands single in her only sanctuary ;  
A lonely wanderer, art gone, by pain  
Compelled and sickness, at this latter day,  
This sorrowful reverse for all mankind.

I feel for thee, must utter what I feel :  
The sympathies erewhile in part discharged,  
Gather afresh, and will have vent again :  
My own delights do scarcely seem to me

My own delights ; the lordly Alps themselves,  
Those rosy peaks, from which the Morning  
looks

Abroad on many nations, are no more  
For me that image of pure gladness  
Which they were wont to be. Through  
kindred scenes,

For purpose, at a time, how different !  
Thou tak'st thy way, carrying the heart and  
soul

That Nature gives to Poets, now by thought  
Matured, and in the summer of their  
strength.

Oh ! wrap him in your shades, ye giant  
woods,

On Etna's side ; and thou, O flowery field  
Of Enna ! is there not some nook of thine,  
From the first play-time of the infant world  
Kept sacred to restorative delight,  
When from afar invoked by anxious love ?

Child of the mountains, among shepherds  
reared,

Ere yet familiar with the classic page,  
I learnt to dream of Sicily ; and lo,  
The gloom, that, but a moment past, was  
deepened

At thy command, at her command gives  
way ;

A pleasant promise, wafted from her shores,  
Comes o'er my heart : in fancy I behold  
Her seas yet smiling, her once happy vales ;  
Nor can my tongue give utterance to a  
name

Of note belonging to that honoured isle,  
Philosopher or Bard, Empedocles,  
Or Archimedes, pure abstracted soul !  
That doth not yield a solace to my grief :  
And, O Theocritus,<sup>1</sup> so far have some  
Prevailed among the powers of heaven and  
earth,

By their endowments, good or great, that  
they

Have had, as thou reportest, miracles  
Wrought for them in old time : yea, not  
unmoved,

When thinking on my own beloved friend,  
I hear thee tell how bees with honey fed  
Divine Comates, by his impious lord  
Within a chest imprisoned ; how they came  
Laden from blooming grove or flowery field,  
And fed him there, alive, month after  
month,

<sup>1</sup> *Theocrit.* *Idyll.* vii. 78.

Because the goatherd, blessed man ! had  
lips /  
Wet with the Muses' nectar.

Thus I soothe  
The pensive moments by this calm fire-side,  
And find a thousand bounteous images  
To cheer the thoughts of those I love, and  
mine.

Our prayers have been accepted ; thou wilt  
stand

On Etna's summit, above earth and sea,  
Triumphant, winning from the invaded  
heavens

Thoughts without bound, magnificent des-  
signs,

Worthy of poets who attuned their harps  
In wood or echoing cave, for discipline  
Of heroes ; or, in reverence to the gods,  
'Mid temples, served by sapient priests, and  
choirs

Of virgins crowned with roses. Not in vain  
Those temples, where they in their ruins yet  
Survive for inspiration, shall attract  
Thy solitary steps : and on the brink  
Thou wilt recline of pastoral Arethuse ;  
Or, if that fountain be in truth no more,  
Then, near some other spring—which, by  
the name

Thou gratest, willingly deceived—  
I see thee linger a glad votary,  
And not a captive pining for his home.

#### BOOK TWELFTH

#### IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED

LONG time have human ignorance and guilt  
Detained us, on what spectacles of woe  
Compelled to look, and inwardly oppressed  
With sorrow, disappointment, vexing  
thoughts,

Confusion of the judgment, zeal decayed,  
And, lastly, utter loss of hope itself  
And things to hope for ! Not with these  
began

Our song, and not with these our song  
must end.

Ye motions of delight, that haunt the sides  
Of the green hills ; ye breezes and soft airs,  
Whose subtle intercourse with breathing  
flowers,

Feelingly watched, might teach Man's  
haughty race

How without injury to take, to give  
Without offence ; ye who, as if to show  
The wondrous influence of power gently  
used,

Bend the complying heads of lordly pines,  
And, with a touch, shift the stupendous  
clouds

Through the whole compass of the sky ; ye  
brooks,

Muttering along the stones, a busy noise  
By day, a quiet sound in silent night ;  
Ye waves, that out of the great deep steal  
forth

In a calm hour to kiss the pebbly shore,  
Not mute, and then retire, fearing no  
storm ;

And you, ye groves, whose ministry it is  
To interpose the covert of your shades,  
Even as a sleep, between the heart of man  
And outward troubles, between man himself,  
Not seldom, and his own uneasy heart :  
Oh ! that I had a music and a voice  
Harmonious as your own, that I might tell  
What ye have done for me. The morning  
shines,

Nor heedeth Man's perverseness ; Spring  
returns,—

I saw the Spring return, and could rejoice,  
In common with the children of her love,  
Piping on boughs, or sporting on fresh  
fields,

Or boldly seeking pleasure nearer heaven  
On wings that navigate cerulean skies,  
So neither were complacency, nor peace,  
Nor tender yearnings, wanting for my good  
Through these distracted times ; in Nature  
still

Glorying, I found a counterpoise in her,  
Which, when the spirit of evil reached its  
height,  
Maintained for me a secret happiness.

This narrative, my Friend ! hath chiefly  
told

Of intellectual power, fostering love,  
Dispensing truth, and, over men and things,  
Where reason yet might hesitate, diffusing  
Prophetic sympathies of genial faith :  
So was I favoured—such my happy lot—  
Until that natural graciousness of mind  
Gave way to overpressure from the times  
And their disastrous issues. What availed,  
When spells forbade the voyager to land,  
That fragrant notice of a pleasant shore

Wafted, at intervals, from many a bower  
Of blissful gratitude and fearless love?  
Dare I avow that wish was mine to see,  
And hope that future times *would* surely  
see,

The man to come, parted, as by a gulph,  
From him who had been; that I could no  
more

Trust the elevation which had made me  
one

With the great family that still survives  
To illuminate the abyss of ages past,  
Sage, warrior, patriot, hero; for it seemed  
That their best virtues were not free from  
taint

Of something false and weak, that could  
not stand

The open eye of Reason. Then I said,  
"Go to the Poets, they will speak to thee  
More perfectly of purer creatures;—yet  
If reason be nobility in man,  
Can aught be more ignoble than the man  
Whom they delight in, blinded as he is  
By prejudice, the miserable slave  
Of low ambition or distempered love?"

In such strange passion, if I may once  
more

Review the past, I warred against myself—  
A bigot to a new idolatry—  
Like a cowed monk who hath forsworn the  
world,

Zealously laboured to cut off my heart  
From all the sources of her former strength;  
And as, by simple waving of a wand,  
The wizard instantaneously dissolves  
Palace or grove, even so could I unsoul  
As readily by syllogistic words  
Those mysteries of being which have made,  
And shall continue evermore to make,  
Of the whole human race one brotherhood.

What wonder, then, if, to a mind so far  
Perverted, even the visible Universe  
Fell under the dominion of a taste  
Less spiritual, with microscopic view  
Was scanned, as I had scanned the moral  
world?

O Soul of Nature! excellent and fair!  
That doulst rejoice with me, with whom I,  
too,  
Rejoiced through early youth, before the  
winds

And roaring waters, and in lights and  
shades

That marched and countermarched about  
the hills

In glorious apparition, Powers on whom  
I daily waited, now all eye and now  
All ear; but never long without the heart  
Employed, and man's unfolding intellect:  
O Soul of Nature! that, by laws divine  
Sustained and governed, still dost overflow  
With an impassioned life, what feeble ones  
Walk on this earth! how feeble have I been  
When thou wert in thy strength! Nor this  
through stroke

Of human suffering, such as justifies  
Remissness and inaptitude of mind,  
But through presumption; even in pleasure  
pleased

Unworthily, disliking here, and there  
Liking; by rules of mimic art transferred  
To things above all art; but more,—for  
this,

Although a strong infection of the age,  
Was never much my habit—giving way  
To a comparison of scene with scene,  
Bent overmuch on superficial things,  
Pampering myself with meagre novelties  
Of colour and proportion; to the moods  
Of time and season, to the moral power,  
The affections and the spirit of the place,  
Insensible. Nor only did the love  
Of sitting thus in judgment interrupt  
My deeper feelings, but another cause,  
More subtle and less easily explained,  
That almost seems inherent in the creature,  
A twofold frame of body and of mind.  
I speak in recollection of a time  
When the bodily eye, in every stage of life  
The most despotic of our senses, gained  
Such strength in *me* as often held my mind  
In absolute dominion. Gladly here,  
Entering upon abstruser argument,  
Could I endeavour to unfold the means  
Which Nature studiously employs to thwart  
This tyranny, summons all the senses each  
To counteract the other, and themselves,  
And makes them all, and the objects with  
which all

Are conversant, subservient in their turn  
To the great ends of Liberty and Power.  
But leave we this: enough that my delights  
(Such as they were) were sought insatiably.  
Vivid the transport, vivid though not pro-  
found;

I roamed from hill to hill, from rock to rock,  
 Still craving combinations of new forms,  
 New pleasure, wider empire for the sight,  
 Proud of her own endowments, and rejoiced  
 To lay the inner faculties asleep.  
 Amid the turns and counterturns, the strife  
 And various trials of our complex being,  
 As we grow up, such thralldom of that sense  
 Seems hard to shun. And yet I knew a maid,  
 A young enthusiast, who escaped these bonds ;  
 Her eye was not the mistress of her heart ;  
 Far less did rules prescribed by passive taste,  
 Or barren intermeddling subtleties,  
 Perplex her mind ; but, wise as women are  
 When genial circumstance hath favoured them,  
 She welcomed what was given, and craved no more ;  
 Whate'er the scene presented to her view  
 That was the best, to that she was attuned  
 By her benign simplicity of life,  
 And through a perfect happiness of soul,  
 Whose variegated feelings were in this  
 Sisters, that they were each some new delight.  
 Birds in the bower, and lambs in the green field,  
 Could they have known her, would have loved ; methought  
 Her very presence such a sweetness breathed,  
 That flowers, and trees, and even the silent hills,  
 And everything she looked on, should have had  
 An intimation how she bore herself  
 Towards them and to all creatures. God delights  
 In such a being ; for, her common thoughts  
 Are piety, her life is gratitude.

Even like this maid, before I was called forth  
 From the retirement of my native hills,  
 I loved whate'er I saw : nor lightly loved,  
 But most intensely ; never dreamt of aught  
 More grand, more fair, more exquisitely framed  
 Than those few nooks to which my happy feet

Were limited. I had not at that time  
 Lived long enough, nor in the least survived  
 The first diviner influence of this world,  
 As it appears to unaccustomed eyes.  
 Worshipping them among the depth of things,  
 As piety ordained, could I submit  
 To measured admiration, or to aught  
 That should preclude humility and love ?  
 I felt, observed, and pondered ; did not judge,  
 Yea, never thought of judging ; with the gift  
 Of all this glory filled and satisfied.  
 And afterwards, when through the gorgeous Alps  
 Roaming, I carried with me the same heart :  
 In truth, the degradation—howsoever  
 Induced, effect, in whatsoever degree,  
 Of custom that prepares a partial scale  
 In which the little oft outweighs the great ;  
 Or any other cause that hath been named ;  
 Or lastly, aggravated by the times  
 And their impassioned sounds, which well might make  
 The milder minstreltries of rural scenes  
 Inaudible—was transient ; I had known  
 Too forcibly, too early in my life,  
 Visitings of imaginative power  
 For this to last : I shook the habit off  
 Entirely and for ever, and again  
 In Nature's presence stood, as now I stand,  
 A sensitive being, a *creative* soul.

There are in our existence spots of time,  
 That with distinct pre-eminence retain  
 A renovating virtue, whence—depressed  
 By false opinion and contentious thought,  
 Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight,  
 In trivial occupations, and the round  
 Of ordinary intercourse—our minds  
 Are nourished and invisibly repaired ;  
 A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,  
 That penetrates, enables us to mount,  
 When high, more high, and lifts us up  
 when fallen.  
 This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks  
 Among those passages of life that give  
 Profoundest knowledge to what point, and how,  
 The mind is lord and master—outward sense

The obedient servant of her will. Such moments  
 Are scattered everywhere, taking their date  
 From our first childhood. I remember well,  
 That once, while yet my inexperienced hand  
 Could scarcely hold a bridle, with proud hopes  
 I mounted, and we journeyed towards the hills :  
 An ancient servant of my father's house  
 Was with me, my encourager and guide :  
 We had not travelled long, ere some mischance  
 Disjoined me from my comrade ; and, through fear  
 Dismounting, down the rough and stony moor  
 I led my horse, and, stumbling on, at length  
 Came to a bottom, where in former times  
 A murderer had been hung in iron chains.  
 The gibbet-mast had mouldered down, the bones  
 And iron case were gone ; but on the turf,  
 Hard by, soon after that fell deed was wrought,  
 Some unknown hand had carved the murderer's name.  
 The monumental letters were inscribed  
 In times long past ; but still, from year to year  
 By superstition of the neighbourhood,  
 The grass is cleared away, and to this hour  
 The characters are fresh and visible :  
 A casual glance had shown them, and I fled,  
 Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the road :  
 Then, reascending the bare common, saw  
 A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,  
 The beacon on the summit, and, more near,  
 A girl, who bore a pitcher on her head,  
 And seemed with difficult steps to force her way  
 Against the blowing wind. It was, in truth,  
 An ordinary sight ; but I should need  
 Colours and words that are unknown to man,  
 To paint the visionary dreariness  
 Which, while I looked all round for my  
 lost guide,

Invested moorland waste and naked pool,  
 The beacon crowning the lone eminence,  
 The female and her garments vexed and tossed  
 By the strong wind. When, in the blessed hours  
 Of early love, the loved one at my side,  
 I roamed, in daily presence of this scene,  
 Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,  
 And on the melancholy beacon, fell  
 A spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam ;  
 And think ye not with radiance more sublime  
 For these remembrances, and for the power  
 They had left behind ? So feeling comes in aid  
 Of feeling, and diversity of strength  
 Attends us, if but once we have been strong.  
 Oh ! mystery of man, from what a depth  
 Proceed thy honours. I am lost, but see  
 In simple childhood something of the base  
 On which thy greatness stands ; but this I feel,  
 That from thyself it comes, that thou must give,  
 Else never canst receive. The days gone by  
 Return upon me almost from the dawn  
 Of life : the hiding-places of man's power  
 Open ; I would approach them, but they close.  
 I see by glimpses now ; when age comes on,  
 May scarcely see at all ; and I would give,  
 While yet we may, as far as words can give,  
 Substance and life to what I feel, enshrining,  
 Such is my hope, the spirit of the Past  
 For future restoration.—Yet another  
 Of these memorials :—  
 One Christmas-time,  
 On the glad eve of its dear holidays,  
 Feverish, and tired, and restless, I went forth  
 Into the fields, impatient for the sight  
 Of those led palfreys that should bear us home ;  
 My brothers and myself. There rose a crag,  
 That, from the meeting-point of two high-ways  
 Ascending, overlooked them both, far stretched ;



Thither, uncertain on which road to fix  
 My expectation, thither I repaired,  
 Scout-like, and gained the summit ; 'twas  
     a day  
 Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the  
     grass  
 I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall ;  
 Upon my right hand couched a single  
     sheep,  
 Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood ;  
 With those companions at my side, I  
     watched,  
 Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist  
 Gave intermitting prospect of the copse  
 And plain beneath. Ere we to school  
     returned,—  
 That dreary time,—ere we had been ten  
     days  
 Sojourners in my father's house, he died ;  
 And I and my three brothers, orphans then,  
 Followed his body to the grave. The  
     event,  
 With all the sorrow that it brought,  
     appeared  
 A chastisement ; and when I called to mind  
 That day so lately past, when from the crag  
 I looked in such anxiety of hope ;  
 With trite reflections of morality,  
 Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low  
 To God, Who thus corrected my desires ;  
 And, afterwards, the wind and sleety rain,  
 And all the business of the elements,  
 The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,  
 And the bleak music from that old stone  
     wall,  
 The noise of wood and water, and the mist  
 That on the line of each of those two roads  
 Advanced in such indisputable shapes ;  
 All these were kindred spectacles and  
     sounds  
 To which I oft repaired, and thence would  
     drink,  
 As at a fountain ; and on winter nights,  
 Down to this very time, when storm and  
     rain  
 Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,  
 While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,  
 Laden with summer's thickest foliage, rock  
 In a strong wind, some working of the  
     spirit,  
 Some inward agitations thence are brought,  
 Whate'er their office, whether to beguile  
 Thoughts over busy in the course they took,  
 Or animate an hour of vacant ease.

## BOOK THIRTEENTH

IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED  
 AND RESTORED (*concluded*)

FROM Nature doth emotion come, and  
     moods  
 Of calmness equally are Nature's gift :  
 This is her glory ; these two attributes  
 Are sister horns that constitute her strength.  
 Hence Genius, born to thrive by inter-  
     change  
 Of peace and excitement, finds in her  
 His best and purest friend ; from her  
     receives  
 That energy by which he seeks the truth,  
 From her that happy stillness of the mind  
 Which fits him to receive it when unsought.

Such benefit the humblest intellects  
 Partake of, each in their degree ; 'tis mine  
 To speak, what I myself have known and  
     felt ;  
 Smooth task ! for words find easy way,  
     inspired  
 By gratitude, and confidence in truth.  
 Long time in search of knowledge did I  
     range  
 The field of human life, in heart and mind  
 Benighted ; but, the dawn beginning now  
 To re-appear, 'twas proved that not in vain  
 I had been taught to reverence a Power  
 That is the visible quality and shape  
 And image of right reason ; that matures  
 Her processes by steadfast laws ; gives birth  
 To no impatient or fallacious hopes,  
 No heat of passion or excessive zeal,  
 No vain conceits ; provokes to no quick  
     turns  
 Of self-applauding intellect ; but trains  
 To meekness, and exalts by humble faith ;  
 Holds up before the mind intoxicate  
 With present objects, and the busy dance  
 Of things that pass away, a temperate show  
 Of objects that endure ; and by this course  
 Disposes her, when over-fondly set  
 On throwing off incumbrances, to seek  
 In man, and in the frame of social life,  
 Whate'er there is desirable and good  
 Of kindred permanence, unchanged in form  
 And function, or, through strict vicissitude  
 Of life and death, revolving. Above all  
 Were re-established now those watchful  
     thoughts

Which, seeing little worthy or sublime  
In what the Historian's pen so much  
delights

To blazon—power and energy detached  
From moral purpose—early tutored me  
To look with feelings of fraternal love  
Upon the unassuming things that hold  
A silent station in this beauteous world.

Thus moderated, thus composed, I found  
Once more in Man an object of delight,  
Of pure imagination, and of love ;  
And, as the horizon of my mind enlarged,  
Again I took the intellectual eye  
For my instructor, studious more to see  
Great truths, than touch and handle little  
ones.

Knowledge was given accordingly ; my trust  
Became more firm in feelings that had stood  
The test of such a trial ; clearer far  
My sense of excellence — of right and  
wrong :

The promise of the present time retired  
Into its true proportion ; sanguine schemes,  
Ambitious projects, pleased me less ; I  
sought

For present good in life's familiar face,  
And built thereon my hopes of good to  
come.

With settling judgments now of what  
would last

And what would disappear ; prepared to  
find

Presumption, folly, madness, in the men  
Who thrust themselves upon the passive  
world

As Rulers' of the world ; to see in these,  
Even when the public welfare is their aim,  
Plans without thought, or built on theories  
Vague and unsound ; and having brought  
the books

Of modern statists to their proper test,  
Life, human life, with all its sacred claims  
Of sex and age, and heaven-descended  
rights,

Mortal, or those beyond the reach of death ;  
And having thus discerned how dire a thing  
Is worshipped in that idol proudly named  
"The Wealth of Nations," where alone  
that wealth

Is lodged, and how increased ; and having  
gained

A more judicious knowledge of the worth

And dignity of individual man,  
No composition of the brain, but man  
Of whom we read, the man whom we  
behold

With our own eyes—I could not but in-  
quire—

Not with less interest than heretofore,  
But greater, though in spirit more sub-  
dued—

Why is this glorious creature to be found  
One only in ten thousand ? What one is,  
Why may not millions be ? What bars are  
thrown

By Nature in the way of such a hope ?  
Our animal appetites and daily wants,  
Are these obstructions insurmountable ?  
If not, then others vanish into air.

"Inspect the basis of the social pile :  
Inquire," said I, "how much of mental  
power

And genuine virtue they possess who live  
By bodily toil, labour exceeding far  
Their due proportion, under all the weight  
Of that injustice which upon ourselves  
Ourselves entail." Such estimate to frame  
I chiefly looked (what need to look beyond ?)  
Among the natural abodes of men,  
Fields with their rural works ; recalled to  
mind

My earliest notices ; with these compared  
The observations made in later youth,  
And to that day continued.—For, the time  
Had never been when throes of mighty  
Nations

And the world's tumult unto me could  
yield,

How far soe'er transported and possessed,  
Full measure of content ; but still I craved  
An intermingling of distinct regards  
And truths of individual sympathy  
Nearer ourselves. Such often might be  
gleaned

From the great City, else it must have  
proved

To me a heart-depressing wilderness ;  
But much was wanting : therefore did I  
turn

To you, ye pathways, and ye lonely roads ;  
Sought you enriched with everything I  
prized,

With human kindnesses and simple joys.

Oh ! next to one dear state of bliss,  
vouchsafed,

Alas ! to few in this untoward world,  
 The bliss of walking daily in life's prime  
 Through field or forest with the maid we  
   love,  
 While yet our hearts are young, while yet  
   we breathe  
 Nothing but happiness, in some lone nook,  
 Deep vale, or anywhere, the home of both,  
 From which it would be misery to stir :  
 Oh ! next to such enjoyment of our youth,  
 In my esteem, next to such dear delight,  
 Was that of wandering on from day to day  
 Where I could meditate in peace, and cull  
 Knowledge that step by step might lead  
   me on  
 To wisdom ; or, as lightsome as a bird  
 Wafted upon the wind from distant lands,  
 Sing notes of greeting to strange fields or  
   groves,  
 Which lacked not voice to welcome me in  
   turn :  
 And, when that pleasant toil had ceased to  
   please,  
 Converse with men, where if we meet a face  
 We almost meet a friend, on naked heaths  
 With long long ways before, by cottage  
   bench,  
 Or well-spring where the weary traveller  
   rests.

Who doth not love to follow with his  
   eye  
 The windings of a public way? the sight,  
 Familiar object as it is, hath wrought  
 On my imagination since the morn  
 Of childhood, when a disappearing line,  
 One daily present to my eyes, that crossed  
 The naked summit of a far-off hill  
 Beyond the limits that my feet had trod,  
 Was like an invitation into space  
 Boundless, or guide into eternity.  
 Yes, something of the grandeur which invests  
 The mariner, who sails the roaring sea  
 Through storm and darkness, early in my  
   mind  
 Surrounded, too, the wanderers of the  
   earth ;  
 Grandeur as much, and loveliness far more.  
 Awed have I been by strolling Bedlamites ;  
 From many other uncouth vagrants (passed  
 In fear) have walked with quicker step ; but  
   why  
 Take note of this? When I began to  
   enquire,

To watch and question those I met, and  
   speak  
 Without reserve to them, the lonely roads  
 Were open schools in which I daily read  
 With most delight the passions of mankind,  
 Whether by words, looks, sighs, or tears,  
   revealed ;  
 There saw into the depth of human souls,  
 Souls that appear to have no depth at all  
 To careless eyes. And—now convinced at  
   heart  
 How little those formalities, to which  
 With overweening trust alone we give  
 The name of Education, have to do  
 With real feeling and just sense ; how vain  
 A correspondence with the talking world  
 Proves to the most ; and called to make  
   good search  
 If man's estate, by doom of Nature yoked  
 With toil, be therefore yoked with ignor-  
   ance ;  
 If virtue be indeed so hard to rear,  
 And intellectual strength so rare a boon—  
 I prized such walks still more, for there I  
   found  
 Hope to my hope, and to my pleasure  
   peace  
 And steadiness, and healing and repose  
 To every angry passion. There I heard,  
 From mouths of men obscure and lowly,  
   truths  
 Replete with honour ; sounds in unison  
 With loftiest promises of good and fair.

There are who think that strong affection,  
   love  
 Known by whatever name, is falsely deemed  
 A gift, to use a term which they would use,  
 Of vulgar nature ; that its growth requires  
 Retirement, leisure, language purified  
 By manners studied and elaborate ;  
 That whoso feels such passion in its strength  
 Must live within the very light and air  
 Of courteous usages refined by art.  
 True is it, where oppression worse than  
   death  
 Salutes the being at his birth, where grace  
 Of culture hath been utterly unknown,  
 And poverty and labour in excess  
 From day to day pre-occupy the ground  
 Of the affections, and to Nature's self  
 Oppose a deeper nature ; there, indeed,  
 Love cannot be ; nor does it thrive with ease  
 Among the close and overcrowded haunts

Of cities, where the human heart is sick,  
And the eye feeds it not, and cannot feed.  
—Yes, in those wanderings deeply did I  
feel

How we mislead each other; above all,  
How books mislead us, seeking their reward  
From judgments of the wealthy Few, who  
see

By artificial lights; how they debase  
The Many for the pleasure of those Few;  
Effeminately level down the truth  
To certain general notions, for the sake  
Of being understood at once, or else  
Through want of better knowledge in the  
heads

That framed them; flattering self-conceit  
with words,

That, while they most ambitiously set forth  
Extrinsic differences, the outward marks  
Whereby society has parted man  
From man, neglect the universal heart.

Here, calling up to mind what then I saw,  
A youthful traveller, and see daily now  
In the familiar circuit of my home,  
Here might I pause, and bend in reverence  
To Nature, and the power of human minds,  
To men as they are men within themselves.  
How oft high service is performed within,  
When all the external man is rude in  
show,—

Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,  
But a mere mountain chapel, that protects  
Its simple worshippers from sun and shower.  
Of these, said I, shall be my song; of these,  
If future years mature me for the task,  
Will I record the praises, making verse  
Deal boldly with substantial things; in  
truth

And sanctity of passion, speak of these,  
That justice may be done, obeisance paid  
Where it is due: thus haply shall I teach,  
Inspire; through unadulterated ears  
Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope,—my  
theme

No other than the very heart of man,  
As found among the best of those who live—  
Not unexalted by religious faith,  
Nor uninformed by books, good books,  
though few—

In Nature's presence: thence may I select  
Sorrow, that is not sorrow, but delight;  
And miserable love, that is not pain  
To hear of, for the glory that redounds

Therefrom to human kind, and what we  
are.

Be mine to follow with no timid step  
Where knowledge leads me: it shall be my  
pride

That I have dared to tread this holy ground,  
Speaking no dream, but things oracular;  
Matter not lightly to be heard by those  
Who to the letter of the outward promise  
Do read the invisible soul; by men adroit  
In speech, and for communion with the  
world

Accomplished; minds whose faculties are  
then

Most active when they are most eloquent,  
And elevated most when most admired.  
Men may be found of other mould than  
these,

Who are their own upholders, to themselves  
Encouragement, and energy, and will,  
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words  
As native passion dictates. Others, too,  
There are among the walks of homely life  
Still higher, men for contemplation framed,  
Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase;  
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would  
sink

Beneath them, summoned to such inter-  
course:

Theirs is the language of the heavens, the  
power,

The thought, the image, and the silent joy:  
Words are but under-agents in their souls;  
When they are grasping with their greatest  
strength,

They do not breathe among them: this I  
speak

In gratitude to God, Who feeds our hearts  
For His own service; knoweth, loveth us,  
When we are unregarded by the world.

Also, about this time did I receive  
Convictions still more strong than hereto-  
fore,

Not only that the inner frame is good,  
And graciously composed, but that, no  
less,

Nature for all conditions wants not power  
To consecrate, if we have eyes to see,  
The outside of her creatures, and to breathe  
Grandeur upon the very humblest face  
Of human life. I felt that the array  
Of act and circumstance, and visible form,  
Is mainly to the pleasure of the mind

What passion makes them; that mean-  
while the forms

Of Nature have a passion in themselves,  
That intermingles with those works of man  
To which she summons him; although the  
works

Be mean, have nothing lofty of their own;  
And that the Genius of the Poet hence  
May boldly take his way among mankind  
Wherever Nature leads; that he hath  
stood

By Nature's side among the men of old,  
And so shall stand for ever. Dearest  
Friend!

If thou partake the animating faith  
That Poets, even as Prophets, each with  
each

Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,  
Have each his own peculiar faculty,  
Heaven's gift, a sense that fits him to  
perceive

Objects unseen before, thou wilt not blame  
The humblest of this band who dares to  
hope

That unto him hath also been vouchsafed  
An insight that in some sort he possesses,  
A privilege whereby a work of his,  
Proceeding from a source of untaught  
things,

Creative and enduring, may become  
A power like one of Nature's. To a hope  
Not less ambitious once among the wilds  
Of Sarum's Plain, my youthful spirit was  
raised;

There, as I ranged at will the pastoral  
downs

Trackless and smooth, or paced the bare  
white roads

Lengthening in solitude their dreary line,  
Time with his retinue of ages fled  
Backwards, nor checked his flight until I  
saw

Our dim ancestral Past in vision clear;  
Saw multitudes of men, and, here and  
there,

A single Briton clothed in wolf-skin vest,  
With shield and stone-axe, stride across  
the wold;

The voice of spears was heard, the rattling  
spear

Shaken by arms of mighty bone, in  
strength,

Long mouldered, of barbaric majesty.

I called on Darkness—but before the word

Was uttered, midnight darkness seemed to  
take

All objects from my sight; and lo! again  
The Desert visible by dismal flames;  
It is the sacrificial altar, fed  
With living men—how deep the groans!  
the voice

Of those that crowd the giant wicker thrills  
The monumental hillocks, and the pomp  
Is for both worlds, the living and the dead.  
At other moments—(for through that wide  
waste

Three summer days I roamed) where'er the  
Plain

Was figured o'er with circles, lines, or  
mounds,

That yet survive, a work, as some divine,  
Shaped by the Druids, so to represent  
Their knowledge of the heavens, and image  
forth

The constellations—gently was I charmed  
Into a waking dream, a reverie

That, with believing eyes, where'er I  
turned,

Beheld long-bearded teachers, with white  
wands

Uplifted, pointing to the starry sky,  
Alternately, and plain below, while breath  
Of music swayed their motions, and the  
waste

Rejoiced with them and me in those sweet  
sounds.

This for the past, and things that may  
be viewed

Or fancied in the obscurity of years  
From monumental hints: and thou, O  
Friend!

Pleased with some unpremeditated strains  
That served those wanderings to beguile,  
hast said

That then and there my mind had exercised  
Upon the vulgar forms of present things,  
The actual world of our familiar days,  
Yet higher power; had caught from them  
a tone,

An image, and a character, by books  
Not hitherto reflected. Call we this  
A partial judgment—and yet why? *for then*  
We were as strangers; and I may not  
speak

Thus wrongfully of verse, however rude,  
Which on thy young imagination, trained  
In the great City, broke like light from far.

Moreover, each man's Mind is to herself  
 Witness and judge; and I remember well  
 That in life's every-day appearances  
 I seemed about this time to gain clear sight  
 Of a new world—a world, too, that was fit  
 To be transmitted, and to other eyes  
 Made visible; as ruled by those fixed laws  
 Whence spiritual dignity originates,  
 Which do both give it being and maintain  
 A balance, an ennobling interchange  
 Of action from without and from within;  
 The excellence, pure function, and best  
 power  
 Both of the objects seen, and eye that sees.

## BOOK FOURTEENTH

## CONCLUSION

IN one of those excursions (may they ne'er  
 Fade from remembrance!) through the  
 Northern tracts  
 Of Cambria ranging with a youthful friend,  
 I left Bethgeleit's huts at couching-time,  
 And westward took my way, to see the sun  
 Rise, from the top of Snowdon. To the  
 door  
 Of a rude cottage at the mountain's base  
 We came, and roused the shepherd who  
 attends  
 The adventurous stranger's steps, a trusty  
 guide;  
 Then, cheered by short refreshment, sallied  
 forth.

It was a close, warm, breezeless summer  
 night,  
 Wan, dull, and glaring, with a dripping  
 fog  
 Low-hung and thick that covered all the  
 sky;  
 But, undiscouraged, we began to climb  
 The mountain-side. The mist soon girt  
 us round,  
 And, after ordinary travellers' talk  
 With our conductor, pensively we sank  
 Each into commerce with his private  
 thoughts:  
 Thus did we breast the ascent, and by my-  
 self  
 Was nothing either seen or heard that  
 checked  
 Those musings or diverted, save that once

The shepherd's lurcher, who, among the  
 crags,  
 Had to his joy unearthed a hedgehog,  
 teased  
 His coiled-up prey with barkings turbulent.  
 This small adventure, for even such it  
 seemed  
 In that wild place and at the dead of night,  
 Being over and forgotten, on we wound  
 In silence as before. With forehead bent  
 Earthward, as if in opposition set  
 Against an enemy, I panted up  
 With eager pace, and no less eager  
 thoughts.  
 Thus might we wear a midnight hour  
 away,  
 Ascending at loose distance each from each,  
 And I, as chanced, the foremost of the  
 band;  
 When at my feet the ground appeared to  
 brighten,  
 And with a step or two seemed brighter  
 still;  
 Nor was time given to ask or learn the  
 cause,  
 For instantly a light upon the turf  
 Fell like a flash, and lo! as I looked up,  
 The Moon hung naked in a firmament  
 Of azure without cloud, and at my feet  
 Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.  
 A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved  
 All over this still ocean; and beyond,  
 Far, far beyond, the solid vapours stretched,  
 In headlands, tongues, and promontory  
 shapes,  
 Into the main Atlantic, that appeared  
 To dwindle, and give up his majesty,  
 Usurped upon far as the sight could reach.  
 Not so the ethereal vault; encroachment  
 none  
 Was there, nor loss; only the inferior stars  
 Had disappeared, or shed a fainter light  
 In the clear presence of the full-orbed  
 Moon,  
 Who, from her sovereign elevation, gazed  
 Upon the billowy ocean, as it lay  
 All meek and silent, save that through a  
 rift—  
 Not distant from the shore whereon we  
 stood,  
 A fixed, abysmal, gloomy, breathing-  
 place—  
 Mounted the roar of waters, torrents,  
 streams

Innumerable, roaring with one voice !  
 Heard over earth and sea, and, in that hour,  
 For so it seemed, felt by the starry heavens.

When into air had partially dissolved  
 That vision, given to spirits of the night  
 And three chance human wanderers, in  
 calm thought

Reflected, it appeared to me the type  
 Of a majestic intellect, its acts  
 And its possessions, what it has and craves,  
 What in itself it is, and would become.  
 There I beheld the emblem of a mind  
 That feeds upon infinity, that broods  
 Over the dark abyss, intent to hear  
 Its voices issuing forth to silent light  
 In one continuous stream ; a mind sustained

By recognitions of transcendent power,  
 In sense conducting to ideal form,  
 In soul of more than mortal privilege.  
 One function, above all, of such a mind  
 Had Nature shadowed there, by putting  
 forth,

'Mid circumstances awful and sublime,  
 That mutual domination which she loves  
 To exert upon the face of outward things,  
 So moulded, joined, abstracted, so endowed  
 With interchangeable supremacy,  
 That men, least sensitive, see, hear, perceive,

And cannot choose but feel. The power,  
 which all

Acknowledge when thus moved, which  
 Nature thus

To bodily sense exhibits, is the express  
 Resemblance of that glorious faculty  
 That higher minds bear with them as their  
 own.

This is the very spirit in which they deal  
 With the whole compass of the universe :  
 They from their native selves can send  
 abroad

Kindred mutations ; for themselves create  
 A like existence ; and, when'er it dawns  
 Created for them, catch it, or are caught  
 By its inevitable mastery,  
 Like angels stopped upon the wing by  
 sound

Of harmony from Heaven's remotest  
 spheres.

Them the enduring and the transient both  
 Serve to exalt ; they build up greatest  
 things

From least suggestions ; ever on the watch,  
 Willing to work and to be wrought upon,  
 They need not extraordinary calls  
 To rouse them ; in a world of life they live,  
 By sensible impressions not enthralled,  
 But by their quickening impulse made  
 more prompt

To hold fit converse with the spiritual  
 world,

And with the generations of mankind  
 Spread over time, past, present, and to  
 come,

Age after age, till Time shall be no more.  
 Such minds are truly from the Deity,  
 For they are Powers ; and hence the high-  
 est bliss

That flesh can know is theirs—the con-  
 sciousness

Of Whom they are, habitually infused  
 Through every image and through every  
 thought,

And all affections by communion raised  
 From earth to heaven, from human to  
 divine ;

Hence endless occupation for the Soul,  
 Whether discursive or intuitive ;  
 Hence cheerfulness for acts of daily life,  
 Emotions which best foresight need not  
 fear,

Most worthy then of trust when most in-  
 tense.

Hence, amid ills that vex and wrongs that  
 crush

Our hearts—if here the words of Holy Writ  
 May with fit reverence be applied—that  
 peace

Which passeth understanding, that repose  
 In moral judgments which from this pure  
 source

Must come, or will by man be sought in  
 vain.

Oh ! who is he that hath his whole life  
 long

Preserved, enlarged, this freedom in him-  
 self ?

For this alone is genuine liberty :  
 Where is the favoured being who hath held  
 That course unchecked, unerring, and un-  
 tired,

In one perpetual progress smooth and  
 bright ?—

A humbler destiny have we retraced,  
 And told of lapse and hesitating choice,

And backward wanderings along thorny ways :

Yet—compassed round by mountain solidudes,

Within whose solemn temple I received  
My earliest visitations, careless then  
Of what was given me ; and which now I range,

A meditative, oft a suffering, man—  
Do I declare—in accents which, from truth  
Deriving cheerful confidence, shall blend  
Their modulation with these vocal streams—  
That, whatsoever falls my better mind,  
Revolving with the accidents of life,  
May have sustained, that, howsoever misled,  
Never did I, in quest of right and wrong,  
Tampere with conscience from a private aim ;

Nor was in any public hope the dupe  
Of selfish passions ; nor did ever yield  
Wilfully to mean cares or low pursuits,  
But shrunk with apprehensive jealousy  
From every combination which might aid  
The tendency, too potent in itself,  
Of use and custom to bow down the soul  
Under a growing weight of vulgar sense,  
And substitute a universe of death  
For that which moves with light and life informed,

Actual, divine, and true. To fear and love,  
To love as prime and chief, for there fear ends,

Be this ascribed ; to early intercourse,  
In presence of sublime or beautiful forms,  
With the adverse principles of pain and joy—

Evil as one is rashly named by men  
Who know not what they speak. By love subsists

All lasting grandeur, by pervading love ;  
That gone, we are as dust.—Behold the fields

In balmy spring-time full of rising flowers  
And joyous creatures ; see that pair, the lamb

And the lamb's mother, and their tender ways

Shall touch thee to the heart ; thou callest this love,

And not inaptly so, for love it is,  
Far as it carries thee. In some green bower

Rest, and be not alone, but have thou there

The One who is thy choice of all the world :  
There linger, listening, gazing, with delight  
Impassioned, but delight how pitiable !

Unless this love by a still higher love  
Be hallowed, love that breathes not without awe ;

Love that adores, but on the knees of prayer,

By heaven inspired ; that frees from chains the soul,

Lifted, in union with the purest, best,  
Of earth-born passions, on the wings of praise

Bearing a tribute to the Almighty's Throne.

This spiritual Love acts not nor can exist

Without Imagination, which, in truth,  
Is but another name for absolute power  
And clearest insight, amplitude of mind,  
And Reason in her most exalted mood.  
This faculty hath been the feeding source  
Of our long labour : we have traced the stream

From the blind cavern whence is faintly heard

Its natal murmur ; followed it to light  
And open day ; accompanied its course  
Among the ways of Nature, for a time  
Lost sight of it bewildered and engulfed ;  
Then given it greeting as it rose once more  
In strength, reflecting from its placid breast  
The works of man and face of human life ;  
And lastly, from its progress have we drawn  
Faith in life endless, the sustaining thought  
Of human Being, Eternity, and God.

Imagination having been our theme,  
So also hath that intellectual Love,  
For they are each in each, and cannot stand

Dividually.—Here must thou be, O Man !  
Power to thyself ; no Helper hast thou here ;  
Here keepest thou in singleness thy state :  
No other can divide with thee this work :  
No secondary hand can intervene  
To fashion this ability ; 'tis thine,  
The prime and vital principle is thine  
In the recesses of thy nature, far  
From any reach of outward fellowship,  
Else is not thine at all. But joy to him,  
Oh, joy to him who here hath sown, hath laid

Here, the foundation of his future years !



For all that friendship, all that love can do,  
 All that a darling countenance can look  
 Or dear voice utter, to complete the man,  
 Perfect him, made imperfect in himself,  
 All shall be his: and he whose soul hath  
 risen

Up to the height of feeling intellect  
 Shall want no humbler tenderness; his  
 heart

Be tender as a nursing mother's heart;  
 Of female softness shall his life be full,  
 Of humble cares and delicate desires,  
 Mild interests and gentlest sympathies.

Child of my parents! Sister of my soul!  
 Thanks in sincerest verse have been elsewhere

Poured out for all the early tenderness  
 Which I from thee imbibed: and 'tis most  
 true

That later seasons owed to thee no less;  
 For, spite of thy sweet influence and the  
 touch

Of kindred hands that opened out the  
 springs

Of genial thought in childhood, and in spite  
 Of all that unassisted I had marked  
 In life or nature of those charms minute  
 That win their way into the heart by  
 stealth

(Still to the very going-out of youth)  
 I too exclusively esteemed *that* love,  
 And sought *that* beauty, which, as Milton  
 sings,

Hath terror in it. Thou didst soften down  
 This over-sternness; but for thee, dear  
 Friend!

My soul, too reckless of mild grace, had  
 stood

In her original self too confident,  
 Retained too long a countenance severe;  
 A rock with torrents roaring, with the  
 clouds

Familiar, and a favourite of the stars:  
 But thou didst plant its crevices with  
 flowers,

Hang it with shrubs that twinkle in the  
 breeze,

And teach the little birds to build their  
 nests

And warble in its chambers. At a time  
 When Nature, destined to remain so long  
 Foremost in my affections, had fallen back  
 Into a second place, pleased to become

A handmaid to a nobler than herself,  
 When every day brought with it some new  
 sense

Of exquisite regard for common things,  
 And all the earth was budding with these  
 gifts

Of more refined humanity, thy breath,  
 Dear Sister! was a kind of gentler spring  
 That went before my steps. Thereafter  
 came

One whom with thee friendship had early  
 paired;

She came, no more a phantom to adorn  
 A moment, but an inmate of the heart,  
 And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined  
 To penetrate the lofty and the low;  
 Even as one essence of pervading light  
 Shines, in the brightest of ten thousand stars  
 And the meek worm that feeds her lonely  
 lamp

Couched in the dewy grass.

With such a theme,  
 Coleridge! with this my argument, of thee  
 Shall I be silent? O capacious Soul!  
 Placed on this earth to love and under-  
 stand,

And from thy presence shed the light of  
 love,

Shall I be mute, ere thou be spoken of?  
 Thy kindred influence to my heart of hearts  
 Did also find its way. Thus fear relaxed  
 Her overweening grasp; thus thoughts and  
 things

In the self-haunting spirit learned to take  
 More rational proportions; mystery,  
 The incumbent mystery of sense and soul,  
 Of life and death, time and eternity,  
 Admitted more habitually a mild  
 Interposition—a serene delight  
 In closer gathering cares, such as become  
 A human creature, howsoever endowed,  
 Poet, or destined for a humbler name;  
 And so the deep enthusiastic joy,  
 The rapture of the hallelujah sent  
 From all that breathes and is, was chastened,  
 stemmed

And balanced by pathetic truth, by trust  
 In hopeful reason, leaning on the stay  
 Of Providence; and in reverence for duty,  
 Here, if need be, struggling with storms,  
 and there

Strewing in peace life's humblest ground  
 with herbs,

At every season green, sweet at all hours.

And now, O Friend! this history is brought

To its appointed close: the discipline  
And consummation of a Poet's mind,  
In everything that stood most prominent,  
Have faithfully been pictured; we have reached

The time (our guiding object from the first)  
When we may, not presumptuously, I hope,  
Suppose my powers so far confirmed, and such

My knowledge, as to make me capable  
Of building up a Work that shall endure.  
Yet much hath been omitted, as need was;  
Of books how much! and even of the other wealth

That is collected among woods and fields,  
Far more: for Nature's secondary grace  
Hath hitherto been barely touched upon,  
The charm more superficial that attends  
Her works, as they present to Fancy's choice  
Apt illustrations of the moral world,  
Caught at a glance, or traced with curious pains.

Finally, and above all, O Friend! (I speak  
With due regret) how much is overlooked  
In human nature and her subtle ways,  
As studied first in our own hearts, and then  
In life among the passions of mankind,  
Varying their composition and their hue,  
Where'er we move, under the diverse shapes  
That individual character presents  
To an attentive eye. For progress meet,  
Along this intricate and difficult path,  
Whate'er was wanting, something had I gained,

As one of many schoolfellows compelled,  
In hardy independence, to stand up  
Amid conflicting interests, and the shock  
Of various tempers; to endure and note  
What was not understood, though known  
to be;

Among the mysteries of love and hate,  
Honour and shame, looking to right and left,

Unchecked by innocence too delicate,  
And moral notions too intolerant,  
Sympathies too contracted. Hence, when called

To take a station among men, the step  
Was easier, the transition more secure,  
More profitable also; for, the mind  
Learns from such timely exercise to keep

In wholesome separation the two natures,  
The one that feels, the other that observes.

Yet one word more of personal concern;—  
Since I withdrew unwillingly from France,  
I led an undomestic wanderer's life,  
In London chiefly harboured, whence I roamed,

Tarrying at will in many a pleasant spot  
Of rural England's cultivated vales  
Or Cambrian solitudes. A youth—(he bore  
The name of Calvert—it shall live, if words  
Of mine can give it life,) in firm belief  
That by endowments not from me withheld  
Good might be furthered—in his last decay  
By a bequest sufficient for my needs  
Enabled me to pause for choice, and walk  
At large and unrestrained, nor damped too soon

By mortal cares. Himself no Poet, yet  
Far less a common follower of the world,  
He deemed that my pursuits and labours lay

Apart from all that leads to wealth, or even  
A necessary maintenance insures,  
Without some hazard to the finer sense;  
He cleared a passage for me, and the stream  
Flowed in the bent of Nature.

Having now  
Told what best merits mention, further pains  
Our present purpose seems not to require,  
And I have other tasks. Recall to mind  
The mood in which this labour was begun,  
O Friend! The termination of my course  
Is nearer now, much nearer; yet even then,  
In that distraction and intense desire,  
I said unto the life which I had lived,  
Where art thou? Hear I not a voice from thee

Which 'tis reproach to hear? Anon I rose  
As if on wings, and saw beneath me stretched  
Vast prospect of the world which I had been

And was; and hence this Song, which, like  
a lark,

I have protracted, in the unwearied heavens  
Singing, and often with more plaintive voice

To earth attempered and her deep-drawn sighs,

Yet centring all in love, and in the end  
All gratulant, if rightly understood.

Whether to me shall be allotted life,

And, with life, power to accomplish aught  
 of worth,  
 That will be deemed no insufficient plea  
 For having given the story of myself,  
 Is all uncertain: but, beloved Friend!  
 When, looking back, thou seest, in clearer  
 view  
 Than any liveliest sight of yesterday,  
 That summer, under whose indulgent skies,  
 Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we  
 roved  
 Unchecked, or loitered 'mid her sylvan  
 combs,  
 Thou in bewitching words, with happy heart,  
 Didst chaunt the vision of that Ancient Man,  
 The bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful woes  
 Didst utter of the Lady Christabel;  
 And I, associate with such labour, steeped  
 In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,  
 Murmuring of him who, joyous hap, was  
 found,  
 After the perils of his moonlight ride,  
 Near the loud waterfall; or her who sate  
 In misery near the miserable Thorn—  
 When thou dost to that summer turn thy  
 thoughts,  
 And hast before thee all which then we  
 were,  
 To thee, in memory of that happiness,  
 It will be known, by thee at least, my  
 Friend!  
 Felt, that the history of a Poet's mind  
 Is labour not unworthy of regard;  
 To thee the work shall justify itself.

The last and later portions of this gift  
 Have been prepared, not with the buoyant  
 spirits

That were our daily portion when we first  
 Together wantoned in wild Poesy,  
 But, under pressure of a private grief,  
 Keen and enduring, which the mind and  
 heart,

That in this meditative history  
 Have been laid open, needs must make me  
 feel

More deeply, yet enable me to bear  
 More firmly; and a comfort now hath risen  
 From hope that thou art near, and wilt be  
 soon

Restored to us in renovated health;  
 When, after the first mingling of our tears,  
 'Mong other consolations, we may draw  
 Some pleasure from this offering of my love.

Oh! yet a few short years of useful life,  
 And all will be complete, thy race be run,  
 Thy monument of glory will be raised;  
 Then, though (too weak to tread the ways  
 of truth)

This age fall back to old idolatry,  
 Though men return to servitude as fast  
 As the tide ebbs, to ignominy and shame,  
 By nations, sink together, we shall still  
 Find solace—knowing what we have learnt  
 to know,

Rich in true happiness if allowed to be  
 Faithful alike in forwarding a day  
 Of firmer trust, joint labourers in the work  
 (Should Providence such grace to us vouch-  
 safe)

Of their deliverance, surely yet to come.  
 Prophets of Nature, we to them will speak  
 A lasting inspiration, sanctified  
 By reason, blest by faith: what we have  
 loved,

Others will love, and we will teach them  
 how;

Instruct them how the mind of man be-  
 comes

A thousand times more beautiful than the  
 earth

On which he dwells, above this frame of  
 things

(Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes  
 And fears of men, doth still remain un-  
 changed)

In beauty exalted, as it is itself  
 Of quality and fabric more divine.

1799-1805.

## THE RECLUSE

### PART FIRST

#### BOOK FIRST—HOME AT GRASMERE

ONCE to the verge of yon steep barrier came  
 A roving school-boy; what the adventurer's  
 age

Hath now escaped his memory—but the  
 hour,

One of a golden summer holiday,  
 He well remembers, though the year be  
 gone—

Alone and devious from afar he came;  
 And, with a sudden influx overpowered  
 At sight of this seclusion, he forgot  
 His haste, for hasty had his footsteps been

As boyish his pursuits ; and sighing said,  
 " What happy fortune were it here to live !  
 And, if a thought of dying, if a thought  
 Of mortal separation, could intrude  
 With paradise before him, here to die !"  
 No Prophet was he, had not even a hope,  
 Scarcely a wish, but one bright pleasing  
 thought,

A fancy in the heart of what might be  
 The lot of others, never could be his.  
 The station whence he looked was soft  
 and green,

Not giddy yet aerial, with a depth  
 Of vale below, a height of hills above.  
 For rest of body perfect was the spot,  
 All that luxurious nature could desire ;  
 But stirring to the spirit ; who could gaze  
 And not feel motions there ? He thought  
 of clouds

That sail on winds : of breezes that delight  
 To play on water, or in endless chase  
 Pursue each other through the yielding plain  
 Of grass or corn, over and through and  
 through,

In billow after billow, evermore  
 Disporting—nor unmindful was the boy  
 Of sunbeams, shadows, butterflies and  
 birds ;

Of fluttering sylphs and softly-gliding Fays,  
 Genii, and winged angels that are Lords  
 Without restraint of all which they behold.  
 The illusion strengthening as he gazed, he  
 felt

That such unfettered liberty was his,  
 Such power and joy ; but only for this end,  
 To flit from field to rock, from rock to field,  
 From shore to island, and from isle to shore,  
 From open ground to covert, from a bed  
 Of meadow-flowers into a tuft of wood ;  
 From high to low, from low to high, yet  
 still

Within the bound of this huge concave ;  
 here

Must be his home, this valley be his world.  
 Since that day forth the Place to him—  
 to me

(For I who live to register the truth  
 Was that same young and happy Being)  
 became

As beautiful to thought, as it had been  
 When present, to the bodily sense ; a haunt  
 Of pure affections, shedding upon joy  
 A brighter joy ; and through such damp  
 and gloom

Of the gay mind, as oftentimes splenetic  
 youth

Mistakes for sorrow, darting beams of light  
 That no self-cherished sadness could with-  
 stand ;

And now 'tis mine, perchance for life, dear  
 Vale,

Beloved Grasmere (let the wandering  
 streams

Take up, the cloud-capt hills repeat, the  
 Name)

One of thy lowly Dwellings is my Home.

And was the cost so great ? and could it  
 seem

An act of courage, and the thing itself  
 A conquest ? who must bear the blame ?  
 Sage man

Thy prudence, thy experience, thy desires,  
 Thy apprehensions—blush thou for them  
 all,

Yes the realities of life so cold,  
 So cowardly, so ready to betray,  
 So stinted in the measure of their grace  
 As we pronounce them, doing them much  
 wrong,

Have been to me more bountiful than hope,  
 Less timid than desire—but that is past.

On Nature's invitation do I come,  
 By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice  
 mislead,

That made the calmest fairest spot of earth  
 With all its unappropriated good  
 My own ; and not mine only, for with me  
 Entrenched, say rather peacefully em-  
 bowered,

Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,  
 A younger Orphan of a home extinct,  
 The only Daughter of my Parents dwells.

Ay, think on that, my heart, and cease  
 to stir,

Pause upon that and let the breathing frame  
 No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.

—Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God,  
 For what hath been bestowed, then where,  
 where then

Shall gratitude find rest ? Mine eyes did  
 ne'er

Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind  
 Take pleasure in the midst of happy thoughts,  
 But either She whom now I have, who now  
 Divides with me this loved abode, was there,  
 Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps  
 turned,

Her voice was like a hidden Bird that sang.

The thought of her was like a flash of light,  
 Or an unseen companionship, a breath  
 Of fragrance independent of the Wind.  
 In all my goings, in the new and old  
 Of all my meditations, and in this  
 Favourite of all, in this the most of all.  
 —What being, therefore, since the birth of  
 Man

Had ever more abundant cause to speak  
 Thanks, and if favours of the Heavenly  
 Muse

Make him more thankful, then to call on  
 Verse

To aid him and in song resound his joy?  
 The boon is absolute; surpassing grace  
 To me hath been vouchsafed; among the  
 bowers

Of blissful Eden this was neither given  
 Nor could be given, possession of the good  
 Which had been sighed for, ancient thought  
 fulfilled,

And dear Imaginations realised,  
 Up to their highest measure, yea and more.  
 Embrace me then, ye Hills, and close  
 me in;

Now in the clear and open day I feel  
 Your guardianship; I take it to my heart;  
 'Tis like the solemn shelter of the night.  
 But I would call thee beautiful, for mild,  
 And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art  
 Dear Valley, having in thy face a smile  
 Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou  
 art pleased,

Pleased with thy crags and woody steep,  
 thy Lake,

Its one green island and its winding shores;  
 The multitude of little rocky hills,  
 Thy Church and cottages of mountain stone  
 Clustered like stars some few, but single  
 most,

And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,  
 Or glancing at each other cheerful looks  
 Like separated stars with clouds between.  
 What want we? have we not perpetual  
 streams,

Warm woods, and sunny hills, and fresh  
 green fields,

And mountains not less green, and flocks  
 and herds,

And thickets full of songsters, and the  
 voice

Of lordly birds, an unexpected sound  
 Heard now and then from morn to latest  
 eve,

Admonishing the man who walks below  
 Of solitude and silence in the sky?  
 These have we, and a thousand nooks of  
 earth

Have also these, but nowhere else is found,  
 Nowhere (or is it fancy?) can be found  
 The one sensation that is here; 'tis here,  
 Here as it found its way into my heart  
 In childhood, here as it abides by day,  
 By night, here only; or in chosen minds  
 That take it with them hence, where'er  
 they go.

—'Tis, but I cannot name it, 'tis the sense  
 Of majesty, and beauty, and repose,  
 A blended holiness of earth and sky,  
 Something that makes this individual spot,  
 This small abiding-place of many men,  
 A termination, and a last retreat,  
 A centre, come from wheresoe'er you will,  
 A whole without dependence or defect,  
 Made for itself, and happy in itself,  
 Perfect contentment, Unity entire.

Bleak season was it, turbulent and bleak,  
 When hitherward we journeyed side by  
 side

Through burst of sunshine and through  
 flying showers;

Paced the long vales—how long they were  
 —and yet

How fast that length of way was left be-  
 hind,

Wensley's rich Vale, and Sedbergh's naked  
 heights.

The frosty wind, as if to make amends  
 For its keen breath, was aiding to our  
 steps,

And drove us onward like two ships at sea,  
 Or like two birds, companions in mid-air,  
 Parted and reunited by the blast.

Stern was the face of nature; we rejoiced  
 In that stern countenance, for our souls  
 thence drew

A feeling of their strength. The naked  
 trees,

The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared  
 To question us. "Whence come ye, to  
 what end?"

They seemed to say, "What would ye,"  
 said the shower,

"Wild Wanderers, whither through my  
 dark domain?"

The sunbeam said, "Be happy." When  
 this vale

We entered, bright and solemn was the sky

That faced us with a passionate welcoming,  
And led us to our threshold. Daylight failed

Insensibly, and round us gently fell  
Composing darkness, with a quiet load  
Of full contentment, in a little shed  
Disturbed, uneasy in itself as seemed,  
And wondering at its new inhabitants.  
It loves us now, this Vale so beautiful  
Begins to love us ! by a sullen storm,  
Two months unwearied of severest storm,  
It put the temper of our minds to proof,  
And found us faithful through the gloom,  
and heard

The poet mutter his prelusive songs  
With cheerful heart, an unknown voice of joy

Among the silence of the woods and hills ;  
Silent to any gladness of sound  
With all their shepherds.

But the gates of Spring  
Are opened ; churlish winter hath given leave

That she should entertain for this one day,  
Perhaps for many genial days to come,  
His guests, and make them jocund.—They are pleased,

But most of all the birds that haunt the flood

With the mild summons ; inmates though they be

Of Winter's household, they keep festival  
This day, who drooped, or seemed to droop, so long ;

They show their pleasure, and shall I do less ?

Happier of happy though I be, like them  
I cannot take possession of the sky,  
Mount with a thoughtless impulse, and wheel there

One of a mighty multitude, whose way  
Is a perpetual harmony and dance  
Magnificent. Behold how with a grace  
Of ceaseless motion, that might scarcely seem

Inferior to angelical, they prolong  
Their curious pastime, shaping in mid-air,  
And sometimes with ambitious wing that soars

High as the level of the mountain tops,  
A circuit ampler than the lake beneath,  
Their own domain ;—but ever, while intent  
On tracing and retracing that large round,

Their jubilant activity evolves  
Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,  
Upwards and downwards ; progress intricate  
Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed  
Their indefatigable flight. 'Tis done,  
Ten times and more I fancied it had ceased,  
But lo ! the vanished company again  
Ascending, they approach. I hear their wings

Faint, faint at first ; and then an eager sound

Passed in a moment—and as faint again !  
They tempt the sun to sport among their plumes ;

Tempt the smooth water, or the gleaming ice,

To show them a fair image,—'tis themselves,

Their own fair forms upon the glimmering plain

Painted more soft and fair as they descend,  
Almost to touch,—then up again aloft,  
Up with a sally and a flash of speed,  
As if they scorned both resting-place and rest !

—This day is a thanksgiving, 'tis a day  
Of glad emotion and deep quietness ;  
Not upon me alone hath been bestowed,  
Me rich in many onward-looking thoughts,  
The penetrating bliss ; oh surely these  
Have felt it, not the happy choirs of spring,  
Her own peculiar family of love  
That sport among green leaves, a blither train !

But two are missing, two, a lonely pair  
Of milk-white Swans ; wherefore are they not seen

Partaking this day's pleasure ? From afar  
They came, to sojourn here in solitude,  
Choosing this Valley, they who had the choice

Of the whole world. We saw them day by day,

Through those two months of unrelenting storm,

Conspicuous at the centre of the Lake  
Their safe retreat, we knew them well, I guess

That the whole valley knew them ; but to us

They were more dear than may be well believed,

Not only for their beauty, and their still  
And placid way of life, and constant love

Inseparable, not for these alone,  
But that *their* state so much resembled ours,  
They having also chosen this abode ;  
They strangers, and we strangers, they a  
pair,

And we a solitary pair like them.  
They should not have departed ; many days  
Did I look forth in vain, nor on the wing  
Could see them, nor in that small open space  
Of blue unfrozen water, where they lodged  
And lived so long in quiet, side by side.  
Shall we behold them consecrated friends,  
Faithful companions, yet another year  
Surviving, they for us, and we for them,  
And neither pair be broken ? nay perchance  
It is too late already for such hope ;  
The Dalesmen may have aimed the deadly  
tube,

And parted them ; or haply both are gone  
One death, and that were mercy given to  
both.

Recall, my song, the ungenerous thought ;  
forgive,

Thricefavoured Region, the conjecture harsh  
Of such inhospitable penalty  
Inflicted upon confidence so pure.

Ah ! if I wished to follow where the sight  
Of all that is before my eyes, the voice  
Which speaks from a presiding spirit here,  
Would lead me, I should whisper to my-  
self :

They who are dwellers in this holy place  
Must needs themselves be hallowed, they  
require

No benediction from the stranger's lips,  
For they are blessed already ; none would  
give

The greeting "peace be with you" unto  
them,

For peace they have ; it cannot but be  
theirs,

And mercy, and forbearance—nay—not  
these—

*Their* healing offices a pure good-will  
Precludes, and charity beyond the bounds  
Of charity—an overflowing love ;  
Not for the creature only, but for all  
That is around them ; love for everything  
Which in their happy Region they behold !

Thus do we soothe ourselves, and when  
the thought

Is passed, we blame it not for having  
come.

—What if I floated down a pleasant stream,

And now am landed, and the motion gone,  
Shall I reprove myself ? Ah no, the stream  
Is flowing, and will never cease to flow,  
And I shall float upon that stream again.  
By such forgetfulness the soul becomes,  
Words cannot say how beautiful : then  
hail,

Hail to the visible Presence, hail to thee,  
Delightful Valley, habitation fair !  
And to whatever else of outward form  
Can give an inward help, can purify,  
And elevate, and harmonise, and soothe.  
And steal away, and for a while deceive  
And lap in pleasing rest, and bear us on  
Without desire in full complacency,  
Contemplating perfection absolute,  
And entertained as in a placid sleep.

But not betrayed by tenderness of mind  
That feared, or wholly overlooked the truth,  
Did we come hither, with romantic hope  
To find in midst of so much loveliness  
Love, perfect love : of so much majesty  
A like majestic frame of mind in those  
Who here abide, the persons like the place.  
Not from such hope, or aught of such  
belief,

Hath issued any portion of the joy  
Which I have felt this day. An awful voice  
'Tis true hath in my walks been often  
heard,

Sent from the mountains or the sheltered  
fields,

Shout after shout—reiterated whoop,  
In manner of a bird that takes delight  
In answering to itself : or like a hound  
Single at chase among the lonely woods,  
His yell repeating ; yet it was in truth  
A human voice—a spirit of coming night ;  
How solemn when the sky is dark, and  
earth

Not dark, nor yet enlightened, but by snow  
Made visible, amid a noise of winds  
And bleatings manifold of mountain sheep,  
Which in that iteration recognise  
Their summons, and are gathering round  
for food,

Devoured with keenness, ere to grove or  
bank

Or rocky bield with patience they retire.

That very voice, which, in some timid  
mood

Of superstitious fancy, might have seemed  
Awful as ever stray demoniac uttered,  
His steps to govern in the wilderness ;

Or as the Norman Curfew's regular beat  
To hearths when first they darkened at the  
knell :

That shepherd's voice, it may have reached  
mine ear

Debased and under profanation, made  
The ready organ of articulate sounds  
From ribaldry, impiety, or wrath,  
Issuing when shame hath ceased to check  
the brawls

Of some abused Festivity—so be it.  
I came not dreaming of unruffled life,  
Untainted manners ; born among the hills,  
Bred also there, I wanted not a scale  
To regulate my hopes ; pleased with the  
good

I shrink not from the evil with disgust,  
Or with immoderate pain. I look for Man,  
The common creature of the brotherhood,  
Differing but little from the Man elsewhere,  
For selfishness and envy and revenge,  
Ill neighbourhood—pity that this should be—  
Flattery and double-dealing, strife and  
wrong.

Yet is it something gained, it is in truth  
A mighty gain, that Labour here preserves  
His rosy face, a servant only here  
Of the fireside or of the open field,  
A Freeman therefore sound and unimpaired :  
That extreme penury is here unknown,  
And cold and hunger's abject wretchedness  
Mortal to body and the heaven-born mind :  
That they who want are not too great a  
weight

For those who can relieve ; here may the  
heart

Breathe in the air of fellow-suffering  
Dreadless, as in a kind of fresher breeze  
Of her own native element, the hand  
Be ready and unwearied without plea,  
From tasks too frequent or beyond its power,  
For languor or indifference or despair.  
And as these lofty barriers break the force  
Of winds,—this deep Vale, as it doth  
in part

Conceal us from the storm, so here abides  
A power and a protection for the mind,  
Dispensed indeed to other solitudes  
Favoured by noble privilege like this,  
Where kindred independence of estate  
Is prevalent, where he who tills the field,  
He, happy man ! is master of the field,  
And treads the mountains which his Fathers  
trod.

Not less than halfway up yon mountain's  
side,

Behold a dusky spot, a grove of Firs  
That seems still smaller than it is ; this  
grove

Is haunted—by what ghost ? a gentle spirit  
Of memory faithful to the call of love ;  
For, as reports the Dame, whose fire sends  
up

Yon curling smoke from the grey cot below,  
The trees (her first-born child being then a  
babe)

Were planted by her husband and herself,  
That ranging o'er the high and houseless  
ground

Their sheep might neither want from peril-  
ous storm

Of winter, nor from summer's sultry heat,  
A friendly covert ; "and they knew it well,"  
Said she, "for thither as the trees grew up  
We to the patient creatures carried food  
In times of heavy snow." She then began  
In fond obedience to her private thoughts  
To speak of her dead husband ; is there not  
An art, a music, and a strain of words  
That shall be life, the acknowledged voice  
of life,

Shall speak of what is done among the fields,  
Done truly there, or felt, of solid good  
And real evil, yet be sweet withal,  
More grateful, more harmonious than the  
breath,

The idle breath of softest pipe attuned  
To pastoral fancies ? Is there such a stream  
Pure and unsullied flowing from the heart  
With motions of true dignity and grace ?  
Or must we seek that stream where Man is  
not ?

Methinks I could repeat in tuneful verse,  
Delicious as the gentlest breeze that sounds  
Through that aerial fir-grove—could pre-  
serve

Some portion of its human history  
As gathered from the Matron's lips, and  
tell

Of tears that have been shed at sight of it,  
And moving dialogues between this Pair  
Who in their prime of wedlock, with joint  
hands

Did plant the grove, now flourishing, while  
they

No longer flourish, he entirely gone,  
She withering in her loneliness. Be this  
A task above my skill—the silent mind



Has her own treasures, and I think of these,  
Love what I see, and honour humankind.

No, we are not alone, we do not stand,  
My sister here misplaced and desolate,  
Loving what no one cares for but ourselves.  
We shall not scatter through the plains and  
rocks

Of this fair Vale, and o'er its spacious  
heights,

Unprofitable kindness, bestowed  
On objects unaccustomed to the gifts  
Of feeling, which were cheerless and for-  
lorn

But few weeks past, and would be so again  
Were we not here; we do not tend a lamp  
Whose lustre we alone participate,  
Which shines dependent upon us alone,  
Mortal though bright, a dying, dying flame.  
Look where we will, some human hand  
has been

Before us with its offering; not a tree  
Sprinkles these little pastures, but the same  
Hath furnished matter for a thought; per-  
chance

For some one serves as a familiar friend.  
Joy spreads, and sorrow spreads; and this  
whole Vale,

Home of untutored shepherds as it is,  
Swarms with sensation, as with gleams of  
sunshine,

Shadows or breezes, scents or sounds.  
Nor deem

These feelings, though subservient more  
than ours

To every day's demand for daily bread,  
And borrowing more their spirit and their  
shape

From self-respecting interests; deem them  
not

Unworthy therefore, and unhallowed—no,  
They lift the animal being, do themselves  
By nature's kind and ever-present aid  
Refine the selfishness from which they  
spring,

Redeem by love the individual sense  
Of anxiousness, with which they are com-  
bined.

And thus it is that fitly they become  
Associates in the joy of purest minds:  
They blend therewith congenially: mean-  
while

Calmly they breathe their own undying life  
Through this their mountain sanctuary;  
long

Oh long may it remain inviolate,  
Diffusing health and sober cheerfulness,  
And giving to the moments as they pass  
Their little boons of animating thought  
That sweeten labour, make it seen and felt  
To be no arbitrary weight imposed,  
But a glad function natural to man.

Fair proof of this, newcomer though I  
be,

Already have I gained; the inward frame,  
Though slowly opening, opens every day  
With process not unlike to that which  
cheers

A pensive stranger journeying at his leisure  
Through some Helvetian Dell; when low-  
hung mists

Break up and are beginning to recede;  
How pleased he is where thin and thinner  
grows

The veil, or where it parts at once, to spy  
The dark pines thrusting forth their spiky  
heads;

To watch the spreading lawns with cattle  
grazed;

Then to be greeted by the scattered huts  
As they shine out; and *see* the streams  
whose murmur

Had soothed his ear while *they* were  
hidden; how pleased

To have about him which way e'er he goes  
Something on every side concealed from  
view,

In every quarter something visible  
Half seen or wholly, lost and found again,  
Alternate progress and impediment,  
And yet a growing prospect in the main.

Such pleasure now is mine, albeit forced,  
Herein less happy than the Traveller,  
To cast from time to time a painful look  
Upon unwelcome things which unawares  
Reveal themselves, not therefore is my  
heart

Depressed, nor does it fear what is to come;  
But confident, enriched at every glance,  
The more I see the more delight my mind  
Receives, or by reflection can create:  
Truth justifies herself, and as she dwells  
With Hope, who would not follow where  
she leads?

Nor let me pass unheeded other loves  
Where no fear is, and humbler sympathies.  
Already hath sprung up within my heart  
A liking for the small grey horse that bears  
The paralytic man, and for the brute

In Scripture sanctified—the patient brute  
On which the cripple, in the quarry maimed,  
Rides to and fro : I know them and their  
ways.

The famous sheep-dog, first in all the vale,  
Though yet to me a stranger, will not be  
A stranger long ; nor will the blind man's  
guide,

Meek and neglected thing, of no renown !  
Soon will peep forth the primrose, ere it  
fades

Friends shall I have at dawn, blackbird  
and thrush .

To rouse me, and a hundred warblers  
more !

And if those Eagles to their ancient hold  
Return, Helvellyn's Eagles ! with the Pair  
From my own door I shall be free to claim  
Acquaintance, as they sweep from cloud  
to cloud.

The owl that gives the name to Owlet-Crag  
Have I heard whooping, and he soon  
will be

A chosen one of my regards. See there  
The heifer in yon little croft belongs  
To one who holds it dear ; with duteous  
care

She reared it, and in speaking of her charge  
I heard her scatter some endearing words  
Domestic, and in spirit motherly,  
She being herself a mother ; happy Beast,  
If the caresses of a human voice  
Can make it so, and care of human hands.

And ye as happy under Nature's care,  
Strangers to me and all men, or at least  
Strangers to all particular amity,  
All intercourse of knowledge or of love  
That parts the individual from his kind,  
Whether in large communities ye keep  
From year to year, not shunning man's  
abode,

A settled residence, or be from far  
Wild creatures, and of many homes, that  
come

The gift of winds, and whom the winds  
again

Take from us at your pleasure ; yet shall ye  
Not want for this your own subordinate  
place

In my affections. Witness the delight  
With which erewhile I saw that multitude  
Wheel through the sky, and see them now  
at rest,

Yet not at rest upon the glassy lake :

They *cannot* rest—they gambol like young  
whelps ;

Active as lambs, and overcome with joy  
They try all frolic motions ; flutter, plunge,  
And beat the passive water with their  
wings.

Too distant are they for plain view, but lo !  
Those little fountains, sparkling in the sun,  
Betray their occupation, rising up  
First one and then another silver spout,  
As one or other takes the fit of glee,  
Fountains and spouts, yet somewhat in the  
guise

Of plaything fireworks, that on festal nights  
Sparkle about the feet of wanton boys.

—How vast the compass of this theatre,  
Yet nothing to be seen but lovely pomp  
And silent majesty ; the birch-tree woods  
Are hung with thousand thousand diamond  
drops

Of melted hoar-frost, every tiny knot  
In the bare twigs, each little budding-place  
Cased with its several beads ; what myriads  
these

Upon one tree, while all the distant grove,  
That rises to the summit of the steep,  
Shows like a mountain built of silver light :  
See yonder the same pageant, and again  
Behold the universal imagery  
Inverted, all its sun-bright features touched  
As with the varnish and the gloss of  
dreams.

Dreamlike the blending also of the whole  
Harmonious landscape : all along the shore  
The boundary lost—the line invisible  
That parts the image from reality ;  
And the clear hills, as high as they ascend  
Heavenward, so deep piercing the lake  
below.

Admonished of the days of love to come  
The raven croaks, and fills the upper air  
With a strange sound of genial harmony ;  
And in and all about that playful band,  
Incapable although they be of rest,  
And in their fashion very rioters,  
There is a stillness ; and they seem to make  
Calm revelry in that their calm abode.  
Them leaving to their joyous hours I pass,  
Pass with a thought the life of the whole  
year

That is to come : the throng of woodland  
flowers

And lilies that will dance upon the waves.  
Say boldly then that solitude is not

Where these things are : he truly is alone,  
 He of the multitude whose eyes are doomed  
 To hold a vacant commerce day by day  
 With Objects wanting life—repelling love ;  
 He by the vast metropolis immured,  
 Where pity shrinks from unremitting calls,  
 Where numbers overwhelm humanity,  
 And neighbourhood serves rather to divide  
 Than to unite—what sighs more deep than  
 his,

Whose nobler will hath long been sacrificed ;  
 Who must inhabit under a black sky  
 A city, where, if indifference to disgust  
 Yield not to scorn or sorrow, living men  
 Are oftentimes to their fellow-men no more  
 Than to the forest Hermit are the leaves  
 That hang aloft in myriads ; nay, far less,  
 For they protect his walk from sun and  
 shower,

Swell his devotion with their voice in  
 storms,  
 And whisper while the stars twinkle among  
 them

His lullaby. From crowded streets remote,  
 Far from the living and dead Wilderness  
 Of the thronged world, Society is here  
 A true community—a genuine frame  
 Of many into one incorporate.

That must be looked for here : paternal  
 sway,  
 One household, under God, for high and  
 low,

One family and one mansion ; to themselves  
 Appropriate, and divided from the world,  
 As if it were a cave, a multitude  
 Human and brute, possessors undisturbed  
 Of this Recess—their legislative Hall,  
 Their Temple, and their glorious Dwelling-  
 place.

Dismissing therefore all Arcadian dreams,  
 All golden fancies of the golden age,  
 The bright array of shadowy thoughts from  
 times

That were before all time, or are to be  
 Ere time expire, the pageantry that stirs  
 Or will be stirring, when our eyes are fixed  
 On lovely objects, and we wish to part  
 With all remembrance of a jarring world,  
 —Take we at once this one sufficient hope,  
 What need of more? that we shall neither  
 droop

Nor pine for want of pleasure in the life  
 Scattered about us, nor through want of  
 aught

That keeps in health the insatiable mind.  
 —That we shall have for knowledge and  
 for love

Abundance, and that feeling as we do  
 How goodly, how exceeding fair, how pure  
 From all reproach is yon ethereal vault,  
 And this deep Vale, its earthly counter-  
 part,

By which and under which we are en-  
 closed

To breathe in peace ; we shall moreover  
 find

(If sound, and what we ought to be our-  
 selves,

If rightly we observe and justly weigh)  
 The inmates not unworthy of their home,  
 The Dwellers of their Dwelling.

And if this  
 Were otherwise, we have within ourselves  
 Enough to fill the present day with joy,  
 And overspread the future years with hope,  
 Our beautiful and quiet home, enriched  
 Already with a stranger whom we love  
 Deeply, a stranger of our Father's house,  
 A never-resting Pilgrim of the Sea,  
 Who finds at last an hour to his content  
 Beneath our roof. And others whom we  
 love

Will seek us also, Sisters of our hearts,  
 And one, like them, a Brother of our hearts,  
 Philosopher and Poet, in whose sight  
 These mountains will rejoice with open joy.  
 —Such is our wealth ! O Vale of Peace  
 we are

And must be, with God's will, a happy  
 Band.

Yet 'tis not to enjoy that we exist,  
 For that end only ; something must be  
 done :

I must not walk in unreprieved delight  
 These narrow bounds, and think of nothing  
 more,

No duty that looks further, and no care.  
 Each Being has his office, lowly some  
 And common, yet all worthy if fulfilled  
 With zeal, acknowledgment that with the  
 gift

Keeps pace a harvest answering to the seed.  
 Of ill-advised Ambition and of Pride  
 I would stand clear, but yet to me I feel  
 That an internal brightness is vouchsafed  
 That must not die, that must not pass away.  
 Why does this inward lustre fondly seek  
 And gladly blend with outward fellowship?

Why do *they* shine around me whom I love?  
 Why do they teach me, whom I thus revere?  
 Strange question, yet it answers not itself.  
 That humble Roof embowered among the  
 trees,

That calm fireside, it is not even in them,  
 Blest as they are, to furnish a reply  
 That satisfies and ends in perfect rest.  
 Possessions have I that are solely mine,  
 Something within which yet is shared by  
 none,

Not even the nearest to me and most dear,  
 Something which power and effort may  
 impart ;

I would impart it, I would spread it wide :  
 Immortal in the world which is to come—  
 Forgive me if I add another claim—  
 And would not wholly perish even in this,  
 Lie down and be forgotten in the dust,  
 I and the modest Partners of my days  
 Making a silent company in death ;  
 Love, knowledge, all my manifold delights,  
 All buried with me without monument  
 Or profit unto any but ourselves !  
 It must not be, if I, divinely taught,  
 Be privileged to speak as I have felt  
 Of what in man is human or divine.

While yet an innocent little one, with a  
 heart

That doubtless wanted not its tender moods,  
 I breathed (for this I better recollect)  
 Among wild appetites and blind desires,  
 Motions of savage instinct my delight  
 And exaltation. Nothing at that time  
 So welcome, no temptation half so dear  
 As that which urged me to a daring feat,  
 Deep pools, tall trees, black chasms, and  
 dizzy crags,

And tottering towers : I loved to stand and  
 read

Their looks forbidding, read and disobey,  
 Sometimes in act and evermore in thought.  
 With impulses, that scarcely were by these  
 Surpassed in strength, I heard of danger  
 met

Or sought with courage ; enterprise forlorn  
 By one, sole keeper of his own intent,  
 Or by a resolute few, who for the sake  
 Of glory fronted multitudes in arms.  
 Yea, to this hour I cannot read a Tale  
 Of two brave vessels matched in deadly  
 fight,

And fighting to the death, but I am pleased  
 More than a wise man ought to be ; I wish,

Fret, burn, and struggle, and in soul am  
 there.

But me hath Nature tamed, and bade to  
 seek

For other agitations, or be calm ;  
 Hath dealt with me as with a turbulent  
 stream,

Some nursling of the mountains which she  
 leads

Through quiet meadows, after he has learnt  
 His strength, and had his triumph and his  
 joy,

His desperate course of tumult and of glee.  
 That which in stealth by Nature was per-  
 formed

Hath Reason sanctioned : her deliberate  
 Voice

Hath said ; be mild, and cleave to gentle  
 things,

Thy glory and thy happiness be there.  
 Nor fear, though thou confide in me, a  
 want

Of aspirations that have been—of foes  
 To wrestle with, and victory to complete,  
 Bounds to be leapt, darkness to be explored ;  
 All that inflamed thy infant heart, the love,  
 The longing, the contempt, the undaunted  
 quest,

All shall survive, though changed their  
 office, all

Shall live, it is not in their power to die.  
 Then farewell to the Warrior's Schemes,  
 farewell

The forwardness of soul which looks that  
 way

Upon a less incitement than the Cause  
 Of Liberty endangered, and farewell  
 That other hope, long mine, the hope to  
 fill

The heroic trumpet with the Muse's breath !  
 Yet in this peaceful Vale we will not spend  
 Unheard-of days, though loving peaceful  
 thought,

A voice shall speak, and what will be the  
 theme ?

On Man, on Nature, and on Human  
 Life,

Musing in solitude, I oft perceive  
 Fair trains of imagery before me rise,  
 Accompanied by feelings of delight  
 Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed ;  
 And I am conscious of affecting thoughts  
 And dear remembrances, whose presenee  
 soothes

Or elevates the Mind, intent to weigh  
 The good and evil of our mortal state.  
 —To these emotions, whence soe'er they  
   come,  
 Whether from breath of outward circum-  
   stance,  
 Or from the Soul—an impulse to herself—  
 I would give utterance in numerous verse.  
 Of Truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and  
   Hope,  
 And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith ;  
 Of blessed consolations in distress ;  
 Of moral strength, and intellectual Power ;  
 Of joy in widest commonalty spread ;  
 Of the individual Mind that keeps her own  
 Inviolatè retirement, subject there  
 To Conscience only, and the law supreme  
 Of that Intelligence which governs all—  
 I sing :—“ fit audience let me find though  
   few ! ”

So prayed, more gaining than he asked,  
 the Bard—

In holiest mood. Ætheria, I shall need  
 Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such  
 Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven !  
 For I must tread on shadowy ground, must  
   sink

Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in  
 worlds

To which the heaven of heavens is but a  
 veil.

All strength—all terror, single or in bands,  
 That ever was put forth in personal form—  
 Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir  
 Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal  
 thrones—

I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaos, not  
 The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,  
 Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out  
 By help of dreams—can breed such fear  
 and awe

As fall upon us often when we look  
 Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man—  
 My haunt, and the main region of my song—  
 Beauty—a living Presence of the earth,  
 Surpassing the most fair ideal Forms  
 Which craft of delicate Spirits hath com-  
   posed

From earth's materials—waits upon my  
 steps ;

Pitches her tents before me as I move,  
 An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves  
 Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of  
 old

Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should  
 they be

A history only of departed things,  
 Or a mere fiction of what never was ?  
 For the discerning intellect of Man,  
 When wedded to this goodly universe  
 In love and holy passion, shall find these  
 A simple produce of the common day.  
 —I, long before the blissful hour arrives,  
 Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal  
 verse

Of this great consummation :—and, by  
 words

Which speak of nothing more than what  
 we are,

Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep  
 Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain  
 To noble raptures ; while my voice pro-  
   claims

How exquisitely the individual Mind  
 (And the progressive powers perhaps no less  
 Of the whole species) to the external World  
 Is fitted :—and how exquisitely, too—  
 Theme this but little heard of among men—  
 The external World is fitted to the Mind ;  
 And the creation (by no lower name  
 Can it be called) which they with blended  
 might

Accomplish :—this is our high argument.

—Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft  
 Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the  
 tribes

And fellowships of men, and see ill sights  
 Of madding passions mutually inflamed ;  
 Must hear Humanity in fields and groves  
 Pipe solitary anguish ; or must hang  
 Brooding above the fierce confederate storm  
 Of sorrow, barricaded evermore  
 Within the walls of cities—may these sounds  
 Have their authentic comment ; that even  
 these

Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn !—  
 Descend, prophetic Spirit ! that inspir'st<sup>1</sup>  
 The human Soul of universal earth,  
 Dreaming on things to come ; and dost  
 possess

A metropolitan temple in the hearts  
 Of mighty Poets ; upon me bestow  
 A gift of genuine insight ; that my Song  
 With star-like virtue in its place may shine,  
 Shedding benignant influence, and secure  
 Itself from all malevolent effect  
 Of those mutations that extend their sway

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Throughout the nether sphere!—And if  
with this

I mix more lowly matter ; with the thing  
Contemplated, describe the Mind and Man  
Contemplating ; and who, and what he  
was—

The transitory Being that beheld  
This Vision ;—when and where, and how  
he lived ;

Be not this labour useless. If such theme  
May sort with highest objects, then—dread  
Power !

Whose gracious favour is the primal source  
Of all illumination—may my Life  
Express the image of a better time,  
More wise desires, and simpler manners ;—  
nurse

My Heart in genuine freedom :—all pure  
thoughts

Be with me ;—so shall thy unfailing love  
Guide, and support, and cheer me to the  
end !

### CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character, and, to the honour of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that, though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. For the sake of such of my friends as may happen to read this note I will add, that many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck as mentioned elsewhere. His messmates used to call him the Philosopher, from which it must be inferred that the qualities and dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval, instead of the East India Company's service, to which his family connection had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for

youth, as tending to make good sailors. The best, he used to say, came from Scotland ; the next to them, from the North of England, especially from Westmoreland and Cumberland, where, thanks to the piety and local attachments of our ancestors, endowed, or, as they are commonly called, free, schools abound.

WHO is the happy Warrior ? Who is he  
That every man in arms should wish to be ?  
—It is the generous Spirit, who, when  
brought

Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought  
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish  
thought :

Whose high endeavours are an inward light  
That makes the path before him always  
bright :

Who, with a natural instinct to discern  
What knowledge can perform, is diligent  
to learn ;

Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,  
But makes his moral being his prime care ;  
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,  
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train !  
Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;  
In face of these doth exercise a power  
Which is our human nature's highest dower ;  
Controls them and subdues, transmutes,  
bereaves

Of their bad influence, and their good re-  
ceives :

By objects, which might force the soul to  
abate

Her feeling, rendered more compassionate ;  
Is placable—because occasions rise  
So often that demand such sacrifice ;  
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more  
pure,

As tempted more ; more able to endure,  
As more exposed to suffering and distress ;  
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.  
—'Tis he whose law is reason ; who depends  
Upon that law as on the best of friends ;  
Whence, in a state where men are tempted  
still

To evil for a guard against worse ill,  
And what in quality or act is best  
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,  
He labours good on good to fix, and owes  
To virtue every triumph that he knows :  
—Who, if he rise to station of command,  
Rises by open means ; and there will stand  
On honourable terms, or else retire,  
And in himself possess his own desire ;

Who comprehends his trust, and to the same

Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;  
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait

For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state;  
Whom they must follow; on whose head must fall,

Like showers of manna, if they come at all:  
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,

Or mild concerns of ordinary life,  
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;  
But who, if he be called upon to face  
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined

Great issues, good or bad for human kind,  
Is happy as a Lover; and attired  
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired;  
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law

In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;  
Or if an unexpected call succeed,  
Come when it will, is equal to the need:  
—He who, though thus endued as with a sense

And faculty for storm and turbulence,  
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans  
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;  
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,  
Are at his heart; and such fidelity  
It is his darling passion to approve;  
More brave for this, that he hath much to love:—

'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,  
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,  
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—  
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,  
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—  
Plays, in the many games of life, that one  
Where what he most doth value must be won:

Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,  
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;  
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,

Looks forward, persevering to the last,  
From well to better, daily self-surpassing:  
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth

For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,  
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,  
And leave a dead unprofitable name—  
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;

And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws  
His breath in confidence of Heaven's  
applause:

This is the happy Warrior; this is He  
That every Man in arms should wish to be.  
1806.

### THE HORN OF EGREMONT CASTLE<sup>1</sup>

A tradition transferred from the ancient mansion of Hutton John, the seat of the Hudlestons, to Egremont Castle.

ERE the Brothers through the gateway  
Issued forth with old and young,  
To the Horn Sir Eustace pointed  
Which for ages there had hung.  
Horn it was which none could sound,  
No one upon living ground,  
Save He who came as rightful Heir  
To Egremont's Domains and Castle fair.

Heirs from times of earliest record  
Had the House of Lucie born,  
Who of right had held the Lordship  
Claimed by proof upon the Horn:  
Each at the appointed hour  
Tried the Horn,—it owned his power;  
He was acknowledged: and the blast,  
Which good Sir Eustace sounded, was the last.

With his lance Sir Eustace pointed,  
And to Hubert thus said he,  
"What I speak this Horn shall witness  
For thy better memory.  
Hear, then, and neglect me not!  
At this time, and on this spot,  
The words are uttered from my heart,  
As my last earnest prayer ere we depart.

"On good service we are going  
Life to risk by sea and land,  
In which course if Christ our Saviour  
Do my sinful soul demand,  
Hither come thou back straightway,  
Hubert, if alive that day;  
Return, and sound the Horn, that we  
May have a living House still left in thee!"

"Fear not," quickly answered Hubert;  
"As I am thy Father's son,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

What thou askest, noble Brother,  
With God's favour shall be done."  
So were both right well content:  
Forth they from the Castle went,  
And at the head of their Array  
To Palestine the Brothers took their way.

Side by side they fought (the Lucies  
Were a line for valour famed),  
And where'er their strokes alighted,  
There the Saracens were tamed.  
Whence, then, could it come—the thought—  
By what evil spirit brought?  
Oh! can a brave Man wish to take  
His Brother's life, for Lands' and Castle's  
sake?

"Sir!" the Ruffians said to Hubert,  
"Deep he lies in Jordan flood."  
Stricken by this ill assurance,  
Pale and trembling Hubert stood.  
"Take your earnings."—Oh! that I  
Could have *seen* my Brother die!  
It was a pang that vexed him then;  
And oft returned, again, and yet again.

Months passed on, and no Sir Eustace!  
Nor of him were tidings heard;  
Wherefore, bold as day, the Murderer  
Back again to England steered.  
To his Castle Hubert sped;  
Nothing has he now to dread.  
But silent and by stealth he came,  
And at an hour which nobody could name.

None could tell if it were night-time,  
Night or day, at even or morn;  
No one's eye had seen him enter,  
No one's ear had heard the Horn.  
But bold Hubert lives in glee:  
Months and years went smilingly;  
With plenty was his table spread;  
And bright the Lady is who shares his bed.

Likewise he had sons and daughters;  
And, as good men do, he sate  
At his board by these surrounded,  
Flourishing in fair estate.  
And while thus in open day  
Once he sate, as old books say,  
A blast was uttered from the Horn,  
Where by the Castle-gate it hung forlorn.

'Tis the breath of good Sir Eustace!  
He is come to claim his right:

Ancient castle, woods, and mountains  
Hear the challenge with delight.  
Hubert! though the blast be blown  
He is helpless and alone:  
Thou hast a dungeon, speak the word!  
And there he may be lodged, and thou be  
Lord.

Speak!—astounded Hubert cannot;  
And, if power to speak he had,  
All are daunted, all the household  
Smitten to the heart, and sad.  
'Tis Sir Eustace; if it be  
Living man, it must be he!  
Thus Hubert thought in his dismay,  
And by a postern-gate he slunk away.

Long, and long was he unheard of:  
To his Brother then he came,  
Made confession, asked forgiveness,  
Asked it by a brother's name,  
And by all the saints in heaven;  
And of Eustace was forgiven:  
Then in a convent went to hide  
His melancholy head, and there he died.

But Sir Eustace, whom good angels  
Had preserved from murderers' hands,  
And from Pagan chains had rescued,  
Lived with honour on his lands.  
Sons he had, saw sons of theirs:  
And through ages, heirs of heirs,  
A long posterity renowned,  
Sounded the Horn which they alone could  
sound. x806.

## A COMPLAINT

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. Suggested by  
a change in the manner of a friend.

THERE is a change—and I am poor;  
Your love hath been, not long ago,  
A fountain at my fond heart's door,  
Whose only business was to flow;  
And flow it did: not taking heed  
Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count!  
Blest was I then all bliss above!  
Now, for that consecrated fount  
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love,  
What have I? shall I dare to tell?  
A comfortless and hidden well.



A well of love—it may be deep—  
 I trust it is,—and never dry:  
 What matter? if the waters sleep  
 In silence and obscurity.  
 —Such change, and at the very door  
 Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.  
 1806.

## STRAY PLEASURES

*"—Pleasure is spread through the earth  
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find."*

Suggested on the Thames by the sight of one of those floating mills that used to be seen there. This I noticed on the Surrey side between Somerset House and Blackfriars Bridge. Charles Lamb was with me at the time; and I thought it remarkable that I should have to point out to *him*, an idolatrous Londoner, a sight so interesting as the happy group dancing on the platform. Mills of this kind used to be, and perhaps still are, not uncommon on the Continent. I noticed several upon the river Saône in the year 1799, particularly near the town of Chalons, where my friend Jones and I halted a day when we crossed France; so far on foot: there we embarked, and floated down to Lyons.

By their floating mill,  
 That lies dead and still,  
 Behold yon Prisoners three,  
 The Miller with two Dames, on the breast  
 of the Thames!  
 The platform is small, but gives room for  
 them all;  
 And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes  
 To their mill where it floats,  
 To their house and their mill tethered fast:  
 To the small wooden isle where, their work  
 to beguile,  
 They from morning to even take whatever  
 is given;—  
 And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the spires,  
 All alive with the fires  
 Of the sun going down to his rest,  
 In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,  
 They dance,—there are three, as jocund  
 as free,  
 While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,  
 They themselves make the reel,  
 And their music's a prey which they seize;  
 It plays not for them,—what matter? 'tis  
 theirs;  
 And if they had care, it has scattered their  
 cares,  
 While they dance, crying, "Long as ye  
 please!"

They dance not for me,  
 Yet mine is their glee!  
 Thus pleasure is spread through the earth  
 In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever  
 shall find;  
 Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly  
 kind,  
 Moves all nature to gladness and mirth.

The showers of the spring  
 Rouse the birds, and they sing;  
 If the wind do but stir for his proper  
 delight,  
 Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour will  
 kiss;  
 Each wave, one and t' other, speeds after  
 his brother:  
 They are happy, for that is their right!  
 1806.

## POWER OF MUSIC

Taken from life.

AN Orpheus! an Orpheus! yes, Faith may  
 grow bold,  
 And take to herself all the wonders of  
 old;—  
 Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet with  
 the same  
 In the street that from Oxford hath bor-  
 rowed its name.

His station is there; and he works on the  
 crowd,  
 He sways them with harmony merry and  
 loud;  
 He fills with his power all their hearts to  
 the brim—  
 Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and  
 him?

What an eager assembly! what an empire  
 is this!

The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss;  
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest;  
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer oppress.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds of the night,  
So He, where he stands, is a centre of light;  
It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-browed Jack,  
And the pale-visaged Baker's, with basket on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing in haste—  
What matter! he's caught—and his time runs to waste;  
The Newsman is stopped, though he stops on the fret;  
And the half-breathless Lamplighter—he's in the net!

The Porter sits down on the weight which he bore;  
The Lass with her barrow wheels hither her store;—  
If a thief could be here he might pilfer at ease;  
She sees the Musician, 'tis all that she sees!

He stands, backed by the wall;—he abates not his din  
His hat gives him vigour, with boons dropping in,  
From the old and the young, from the poorest; and there!  
The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the hand  
Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful a band;  
I am glad for him, blind as he is!—all the while  
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they praise with a smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and in height,  
Not an inch of his body is free from delight;

Can he keep himself still, if he would? oh, not he!  
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his crutch; like a tower  
That long has leaned forward, leans hour after hour!—  
That Mother, whose spirit in fetters is bound,  
While she dandles the Babe in her arms to the sound.

Now, coaches and chariots! roar on like a stream;  
Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a dream:  
They are deaf to your murmurs—they care not for you,  
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue!  
1806.

## STAR-GAZERS

Observed by me in Leicester-square, as here described.

WHAT crowd is this? what have we here!  
we must not pass it by;  
A Telescope upon its frame, and pointed to the sky:  
Long is it as a barber's pole, or mast of little boat,  
Some little pleasure-skiff, that doth on Thames's waters float.

The Showman chooses well his place, 'tis Leicester's busy Square;  
And is as happy in his night, for the heavens are blue and fair;  
Calm, though impatient, is the crowd; each stands ready with the fee,  
And envies him that's looking;—what an insight must it be!

Yet, Showman, where can lie the cause?  
Shall thy Implement have blame,  
A boaster, that when he is tried, fails, and is put to shame?  
Or is it good as others are, and be their eyes in fault?  
Their eyes, or minds? or, finally, is yon resplendent vault?

Is nothing of that radiant pomp so good  
as we have here?  
Or gives a thing but small delight that  
never can be dear?  
The silver moon with all her vales, and  
hills of mightiest fame,  
Doth she betray us when they're seen? or  
are they but a name?

Or is it rather that Conceit rapacious is  
and strong,  
And bounty never yields so much but it  
seems to do her wrong?  
Or is it, that when human Souls a journey  
long have had  
And are returned into themselves, they  
cannot but be sad?

Or must we be constrained to think that  
these Spectators rude,  
Poor in estate, of manners base, men of  
the multitude,  
Have souls which never yet have risen,  
and therefore prostrate lie?  
No, no, this cannot be;—men thirst for  
power and majesty!

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought  
the blissful mind employ  
Of him who gazes, or has gazed? a grave  
and steady joy,  
That doth reject all show of pride, admits  
no outward sign,  
Because not of this noisy world, but silent  
and divine!

Whatever be the cause, 'tis sure that they  
who pry and pore  
Seem to meet with little gain, seem less  
happy than before:  
One after One they take their turn, nor  
have I one espied  
That doth not slackly go away, as if dis-  
satisfied. 1806.

### "YES, IT WAS THE MOUNTAIN ECHO"

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The echo  
came from Nab-scar, when I was walking on the  
opposite side of Rydal Mere. I will here mention,  
for my dear Sister's sake, that, while she was  
sitting alone one day high up on this part of  
Loughrigg Fell, she was so affected by the voice

of the Cuckoo heard from the crags at some dis-  
tance that she could not suppress a wish to have  
a stone inscribed with her name among the rocks  
from which the sound proceeded. On my return  
from my walk I recited these verses to Mrs.  
Wordsworth.

YEs, it was the mountain Echo,  
Solitary, clear, profound,  
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,  
Giving to her sound for sound!

Unsolicited reply  
To a babbling wanderer sent;  
Like her ordinary cry,  
Like—but oh, how different!

Hears not also mortal Life?  
Hear not we, unthinking Creatures!  
Slaves of folly, love, or strife—  
Voices of two different natures?

Have not *we* too?—yes, we have  
Answers, and we know not whence;  
Echoes from beyond the grave,  
Recognised intelligence!

Such rebounds our inward ear  
Catches sometimes from afar—  
Listen, ponder, hold them dear;  
For of God,—of God they are.

1806.

### "NUNS FRET NOT AT THEIR CONVENT'S NARROW ROOM"

In the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, one after-  
noon in 1801, my sister read to me the Sonnets of  
Milton. I had long been well acquainted with  
them, but I was particularly struck on that occa-  
sion with the dignified simplicity and majestic  
harmony that runs through most of them,—in  
character so totally different from the Italian,  
and still more so from Shakspeare's fine Sonnets.  
I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and  
produced three Sonnets the same afternoon, the  
first I ever wrote except an irregular one at  
school. Of these three, the only one I distinctly  
remember is—"I grieved for Buonaparté." One  
was never written down: the third, which was,  
I believe, preserved, I cannot particularise.

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow  
room;  
And hermits are contented with their cells;

And students with their pensive citadels;  
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his  
 loom,  
 Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for  
 bloom,

High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,  
 Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:  
 In truth the prison, unto which we doom  
 Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,  
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound  
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;  
 Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs  
 must be)

Who have felt the weight of too much  
 liberty,  
 Should find brief solace there, as I have  
 found. 1806.

## PERSONAL TALK

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. The last line  
 but two stood, at first, better and more character-  
 istically, thus:

"By my half-kitchen and half-parlour fire."

My Sister and I were in the habit of having the  
 tea-kettle in our little sitting-room; and we  
 toasted the bread ourselves, which reminds me of  
 a little circumstance not unworthy of being set  
 down among these minutiae. Happening both of  
 us to be engaged a few minutes one morning  
 when we had a young prig of a Scotch lawyer to  
 breakfast with us, my dear Sister, with her usual  
 simplicity, put the toasting-fork with a slice of  
 bread into the hands of this Edinburgh genius.  
 Our little book-case stood on one side of the fire.  
 To prevent loss of time, he took down a book,  
 and fell to reading, to the neglect of the toast,  
 which was burnt to a cinder. Many a time have  
 we laughed at this circumstance, and other  
 cottage simplicities of that day. By the bye, I  
 have a spite at one of this series of Sonnets (I  
 will leave the reader to discover which) as having  
 been the means of nearly putting off for ever our  
 acquaintance with dear Miss Fenwick, who has  
 always stigmatised one line of it as vulgar, and  
 worthy only of having been composed by a  
 country squire.

## I

I AM not One who much or oft delight  
 To season my fireside with personal talk.—  
 Of friends, who live within an easy walk,  
 Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight:

And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies  
 bright,  
 Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the  
 stalk,  
 These all wear out of me, like Forms, with  
 chalk  
 Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-  
 night.  
 Better than such discourse doth silence  
 long,  
 Long, barren silence, square with my  
 desire;  
 To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,  
 In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,  
 And listen to the flapping of the flame,  
 Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

## II

"Yet life," you say, "is life; we have seen  
 and see,  
 And with a living pleasure we describe;  
 And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe  
 The languid mind into activity.  
 Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and  
 glee  
 Are fostered by the comment and the gibe."  
 Even be it so; yet still among your tribe,  
 Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank  
 not me!  
 Children are blest, and powerful; their  
 world lies  
 More justly balanced; partly at their feet,  
 And part far from them: sweetest melodies  
 Are those that are by distance made more  
 sweet;  
 Whose mind is but the mind of his own  
 eyes,  
 He is a Slave; the meanest we can meet!

## III

Wings have we,—and as far as we can go,  
 We may find pleasure: wilderness and  
 wood,  
 Blank ocean and mere sky, support that  
 mood  
 Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.  
 Dreams, books, are each a world; and  
 books, we know,  
 Are a substantial world, both pure and  
 good:  
 Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh  
 and blood,

Our pastime and our happiness will grow.  
 There find I personal themes, a plenteous  
     store,  
 Matter wherein right voluble I am,  
 To which I listen with a ready ear;  
 Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear,—  
 The gentle Lady married to the Moor;  
 And heavenly Una with her milk-white  
     Lamb.

## IV

Nor can I not believe but that hereby  
 Great gains are mine; for thus I live remote  
 From evil-speaking; rancour, never sought,  
 Comes to me not; malignant truth, or lie.  
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I  
 Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and  
     joyous thought:  
 And thus from day to day my little boat  
 Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.  
 Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,  
 Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler  
     cares—  
 The Poets, who on earth have made us  
     heirs  
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!  
 Oh! might my name be numbered among  
     theirs,  
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.  
   1806.

## ADMONITION

Intended more particularly for the perusal  
 of those who may have happened to be enamoured  
 of some beautiful Place of Retreat, in the Country  
 of the Lakes.

WELL may'st thou halt—and gaze with  
     brightening eye!  
 The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook  
 Hath stirred thee deeply; with its own dear  
     brook,  
 Its own small pasture, almost its own  
     sky!  
 But covet not the Abode;—forbear to sigh,  
 As many do, repining while they look;  
 Intruders—who would tear from Nature's  
     book  
 This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.  
 Think what the home must be if it were  
     thine,  
 Even thine, though few thy wants!—Roof,  
     window, door,

The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,  
 The roses to the porch which they entwine:  
 Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the  
     day  
 On which it should be touched, would melt  
     away.    1806.

“BELOVED VALE! I SAID, WHEN  
     I SHALL CON”

“BELOVED Vale!” I said, “when I shall  
     con  
 Those many records of my childish years,  
 Remembrance of myself and of my peers  
 Will press me down: to think of what is  
     gone  
 Will be an awful thought, if life have  
     one.”  
 But, when into the Vale I came, no fears  
 Distressed me; from mine eyes escaped no  
     tears;  
 Deep thought, or dread remembrance, had  
     I none.  
 By doubts and thousand petty fancies cros’d  
 I stood, of simple shame the blushing  
     Thrall;  
 So narrow seemed the brooks, the fields so  
     small!  
 A Juggler's balls old Time about him  
     tossed;  
 I looked, I stared, I smiled, I laughed;  
     and all  
 The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.  
   1806.

“HOW SWEET IT IS, WHEN  
     MOTHER FANCY ROCKS”

How sweet it is, when mother Fancy  
     rocks  
 The wayward brain, to saunter through a  
     wood!  
 An old place, full of many a lovely brood,  
 Tall trees, green arbours, and ground-  
     flowers in flocks;  
 And wild rose tip-toe upon hawthorn stocks,  
 Like a bold Girl, who plays her agile pranks  
 At Wakes and Fairs with wandering  
     Mountebanks,—  
 When she stands cresting the Clown's  
     head, and mocks

The crowd beneath her. Verily I think,  
Such place to me is sometimes like a dream  
Or map of the whole world : thoughts, link  
by link,  
Enter through ears and eyesight, with such  
gleam  
Of all things, that at last in fear I shrink,  
And leap at once from the delicious stream.  
1806.

"THOSE WORDS WERE UTTERED  
AS IN PENSIVE MOOD"

"——they are of the sky,  
And from our earthly memory fade away."

THOSE words were uttered as in pensive  
mood

We turned, departing from that solemn  
sight :

A contrast and reproach to gross delight,  
And life's unspiritual pleasures daily wooed !  
But now upon this thought I cannot brood ;  
It is unstable as a dream of night ;  
Nor will I praise a cloud, however bright,  
Disparaging Man's gifts, and proper food.  
Grove, isle, with every shape of sky-built  
dome,

Though clad in colours beautiful and pure,  
Find in the heart of man no natural home :  
The immortal Mind craves objects that  
endure :

These cleave to it ; from these it cannot  
roam,

Nor they from it : their fellowship is secure.  
1806.

COMPOSED BY THE SIDE OF  
GRASMERE LAKE

1806.

CLOUDS, lingering yet, extend in solid  
bars

Through the grey west ; and lo ! these  
waters, steeled

By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield  
A vivid repetition of the stars ;

Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars  
Amid his fellows beautifully revealed

At happy distance from earth's groaning  
field,

Where ruthless mortals wage incessant wars.  
Is it a mirror?—or the nether Sphere

Opening to view the abyss in which she feeds  
Her own calm fires?—But list ! a voice is  
near ;

Great Pan himself low-whispering through  
the reeds,

"Be thankful, thou ; for, if unholy deeds  
Ravage the world, tranquillity is here !"

"WITH HOW SAD STEPS, O MOON,  
THOU CLIMB'ST THE SKY"

WITH how sad steps, O Moon, thou  
climb'st the sky,

"How silently, and with how wan a face !"  
Where art thou ? Thou so often seen on  
high

Running among the clouds a Wood-  
nymph's race !

Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath's  
a sigh

Which they would stifle, move at such a  
pace !

The northern Wind, to call thee to the  
chase,

Must blow to-night his bugle horn. Had I  
The power of Merlin, Goddess ! this should  
be :

And all the stars, fast as the clouds were  
riven,

Should sally forth, to keep thee company,  
Hurrying and sparkling through the clear  
blue heaven.

But, Cynthia ! should to thee the palm be  
given,

Queen both for beauty and for majesty.  
1806.

"THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH  
WITH US ; LATE AND SOON"

THE world is too much with us ; late and  
soon,

Getting and spending, we lay waste our  
powers :

Little we see in Nature that is ours ;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid  
boon !

The Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;  
The winds that will be howling at all  
hours,

And are up-gathered now like sleeping  
flowers ;

For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;  
It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less  
forlorn ;

Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed  
horn. 1806.

“ WITH SHIPS THE SEA WAS  
SPRINKLED FAR AND NIGH ”

With Ships the sea was sprinkled far and  
nigh,  
Like stars in heaven, and joyously it  
showed ;

Some lying fast at anchor in the road,  
Some veering up and down, one knew not  
why.

A goodly Vessel did I then espy  
Come like a giant from a haven broad ;  
And lustily along the bay she strode,  
Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.  
This Ship was nought to me, nor I to her,  
Yet I pursued her with a Lover's look ;  
This Ship to all the rest did I prefer :  
When will she turn, and whither ? She  
will brook

No tarrying ; where She comes the winds  
must stir :

On went She, and due north her journey  
took. 1806.

“ WHERE LIES THE LAND TO  
WHICH YON SHIP MUST GO ? ”

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship  
must go ?

Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,  
Festively she puts forth in trim array ;  
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow ?  
What boots the inquiry ?—Neither friend  
nor foe

She cares for ; let her travel where she may,  
She finds familiar names, a beaten way  
Ever before her, and a wind to blow.  
Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark ?  
And, almost as it was when ships were  
rare,

(From time to time, like Pilgrims, here  
and there

Crossing the waters) doubt, and something  
dark,  
Of the old Sea some reverential fear,  
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark !  
1806.

TO SLEEP

O GENTLE SLEEP ! do they belong to thee,  
These twinklings of oblivion ? Thou dost  
love

To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,  
A captive never wishing to be free.

This tiresome night, O Sleep ! thou art to  
me

A Fly, that up and down himself doth  
shove

Upon a fretful rivulet, now above  
Now on the water vexed with mockery.  
I have no pain that calls for patience, no ;  
Hence am I cross and peevish as a child :  
Am pleased by fits to have thee for my  
foe,

Yet ever willing to be reconciled :  
O gentle Creature ! do not use me so,  
But once and deeply let me be beguiled.  
1806.

TO SLEEP

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,  
One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees  
Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and  
seas,

Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and  
pure sky ;

I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie  
Sleepless ! and soon the small birds'  
melodies

Must hear, first uttered from my orchard  
trees ;

And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.  
Even thus last night, and two nights more,  
I lay,

And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any  
stealth :

So do not let me wear to-night away :  
Without Thee what is all the morning's  
wealth ?

Come, blessed barrier between day and  
day,

Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous  
health ! 1806.

## TO SLEEP

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee,  
 Sleep!  
 And thou hast had thy store of tenderest  
 names;  
 The very sweetest, Fancy culls or frames,  
 When thankfulness of heart is strong and  
 deep!  
 Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost  
 steep  
 In rich reward all suffering; Balm that  
 tames  
 All anguish; Saint that evil thoughts and  
 aims  
 Takest away, and into souls dost creep,  
 Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I  
 alone,  
 I surely not a man ungently made,  
 Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is  
 crost?  
 Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,  
 Mere slave of them who never for thee  
 prayed,  
 Still last to come where thou art wanted  
 most! 1806.

TWO TRANSLATIONS FROM  
MICHAEL ANGELO, AND A  
TRANSLATION FROM THE  
LATIN OF THOMAS WARTON.

GRATEFUL is Sleep, my life in stone bound  
 fast;  
 More grateful still: while wrong and shame  
 shall last,  
 On me can Time no happier state bestow  
 Than to be left unconscious of the woe.  
 Ah then, lest you awaken me, speak low.

GRATEFUL is Sleep, more grateful still to be  
 Of marble; for while shameless wrong and  
 woe  
 Prevail, 'tis best to neither hear nor see.  
 Then wake me not, I pray you. Hush,  
 speak low.

COME, gentle Sleep, Death's image tho' thou  
 art,  
 Come share my couch, nor speedily depart;  
 How sweet thus living without life to lie,  
 Thus without death how sweet it is to die.

FROM THE ITALIAN OF MICHAEL  
ANGELO

Translations from Michael Angelo, done at the  
 request of Mr. Duppa, whose acquaintance I  
 made through Mr. Southey. Mr. Duppa was en-  
 gaged in writing the life of Michael Angelo, and  
 applied to Mr. Southey and myself to furnish  
 some specimens of his poetic genius.

## I

YES! hope may with my strong desire keep  
 pace,  
 And I be undeluded, unbetrayed;  
 For if of our affections none finds grace  
 In sight of Heaven, then, wherefore hath  
 God made  
 The world which we inhabit? Better plea  
 Love cannot have, than that in loving thee  
 Glory to that eternal Peace is paid,  
 Who such divinity to thee imparts  
 As hallows and makes pure all gentle hearts.  
 His hope is treacherous only whose love  
 dies  
 With beauty, which is varying every hour;  
 But, in chaste hearts uninfluenced by the  
 power  
 Of outward change, there blooms a death-  
 less flower,  
 That breathes on earth the air of paradise.  
 1806.

## FROM THE SAME

## II

NO mortal object did these eyes behold  
 When first they met the placid light of  
 thine,  
 And my Soul felt her destiny divine,  
 And hope of endless peace in me grew bold:  
 Heaven-born, the Soul a heaven-ward  
 course must hold;  
 Beyond the visible world she soars to seek  
 (For what delights the sense is false and  
 weak)  
 Ideal Form, the universal mould.  
 The wise man, I affirm, can find no rest  
 In that which perishes: nor will he lend  
 His heart to aught which doth on time  
 depend.  
 'Tis sense, unbridled will, and not true love,  
 That kills the soul: love betters what is  
 best,  
 Even here below, but more in heaven above.  
 1806.



### TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT

This young man, Raisley Calvert, to whom I was so much indebted, died at Penrith, 1795.

CALVERT ! it must not be unheard by them Who may respect my name, that I to thee Owed many years of early liberty.

This care was thine when sickness did condemn

Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and stem—

That I, if frugal and severe, might stray Where'er I liked ; and finally array My temples with the Muse's diadem.

Hence, if in freedom I have loved the truth ;

If there be aught of pure, or good, or great, In my past verse ; or shall be, in the lays Of higher mood, which now I meditate ;— It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived, Youth !

To think how much of this will be thy praise.  
1806.

### "METHOUGHT I SAW THE FOOT- STEPS OF A THRONE"

The latter part of this Sonnet was a great favourite with my sister S. H. When I saw her lying in death, I could not resist the impulse to compose the Sonnet that follows it.

I

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a throne

Which mists and vapours from mine eyes did shroud—

Nor view of who might sit thereon allowed ; But all the steps and ground about were strown

With sights the ruefullest that flesh and bone

Ever put on ; a miserable crowd, Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before that cloud,

"Thou art our king, O Death ! to thee we groan."

Those steps I clomb ; the mists before me gave

Smooth way ; and I beheld the face of one Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,

With her face up to heaven ; that seemed to have

Pleasing remembrance of a thought foregone ;

A lovely Beauty in a summer grave !  
1806.

### LINES

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk one Evening, after a stormy day, the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

LOUD is the Vale ! the Voice is up With which she speaks when storms are gone,

A mighty unison of streams ! Of all her Voices, One !

Loud is the Vale ;—this inland Depth In peace is roaring like the Sea Von star upon the mountain-top Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest, Importunate and heavy load !<sup>1</sup> The Comforter hath found me here, Upon this lonely road ;

And many thousands now are sad— Wait the fulfilment of their fear ; For he must die who is their stay, Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth To breathless Nature's dark abyss ; But when the great and good depart What is it more than this—

That Man, who is from God sent forth, Doth yet again to God return ?— Such ebb and flow must ever be, Then wherefore should we mourn ?

1806.

### NOVEMBER 1806

ANOTHER year !—another deadly blow ! Another mighty Empire overthrown ! And We are left, or shall be left, alone ; The last that dare to struggle with the Foe. 'Tis well ! from this day forward we shall know

<sup>1</sup> Importuna e grave salma.—MICHAEL ANGELO.

That in ourselves our safety must be sought;  
That by our own right hands it must be  
wrought;

That we must stand unpropped, or be laid  
low.

O dastard whom such foretaste doth not  
cheer!

We shall exult, if they who rule the land  
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,  
Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band,  
Who are to judge of danger which they  
fear,

And honour which they do not understand.<sup>1</sup>

### ADDRESS TO A CHILD

DURING A BOISTEROUS WINTER EVENING

BY MY SISTER

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

WHAT way does the wind come? What  
way does he go?

He rides over the water, and over the snow,  
Through wood, and through vale; and,  
o'er rocky height

Which the goat cannot climb, takes his  
sounding flight;

He tosses about in every bare tree,  
As, if you look up, you plainly may see;  
But how he will come, and whither he goes,  
There's never a scholar in England knows.

He will suddenly stop in a cunning nook  
And ring a sharp 'larum;—but, if you should  
look,

There's nothing to see but a cushion of snow  
Round as a pillow, and whiter than milk,  
And softer than if it were covered with silk.  
Sometimes he'll hide in the cave of a rock,  
Then whistle as shrill as the buzzard cock;  
—Yet seek him,—and what shall you find  
in the place?

Nothing but silence and empty space;  
Save, in a corner, a heap of dry leaves,  
That he's left, for a bed, to beggars or  
thieves!

As soon as 'tis daylight to-morrow, with me  
You shall go to the orchard, and then you  
will see

That he has been there, and made a great  
route, [about;  
And cracked the branches, and strewn them

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Heaven grant that he spare but that one  
upright twig

That looked up at the sky so proud and big  
All last summer, as well you know,  
Studded with apples, a beautiful show!

Hark! over the roof he makes a pause,  
And growls as if he would fix his claws  
Right in the slates, and with a huge rattle  
Drive them down, like men in a battle:  
—But let him range round; he does us no  
harm,

We build up the fire, we're snug and warm;  
Untouched by his breath see the candle  
shines bright,

And burns with a clear and steady light;  
Books have we to read,—but that half-  
stifed knell,

Alas! 'tis the sound of the eight o'clock  
bell.

—Come now we'll to bed! and when we  
are there

He may work his own will, and what shall  
we care?

He may knock at the door,—we'll not let  
him in;

May drive at the windows,—we'll laugh at  
his din;

Let him seek his own home wherever it be;  
Here's a *cosie* warm house for Edward and  
me. 1806.

### ODE

#### INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

This was composed during my residence at Town-end, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the four first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself; but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *experiences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere—

“A simple child,

That lightly draws its breath,  
And feels its life in every limb,  
What should it know of death!”—

But it was not so much from feelings of animal  
vivacity that *my* difficulty came as from a sense

of the indomitableness of the Spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to the reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we have all reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines—

“Obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings ;” etc.

To that dream-like vividness and splendour which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here : but having in the poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion, which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of Man presents an analogy in its favour. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations ; and, among all persons acquainted with classic literature, is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy. Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind ? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the “Immortality of the Soul,” I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorising me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet.

“The Child is Father of the Man ;  
And I could wish my days to be  
Bound each to each by natural piety.”

See p. 171.

I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove,  
and stream,

The earth, and every common sight,  
To me did seem  
Apparelled in celestial light,  
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—

Turn wheresoe’er I may,

By night or day,

The things which I have seen I now can  
see no more.

II

The Rainbow comes and goes,

And lovely is the Rose,

The Moon doth with delight

Look round her when the heavens are bare,

Waters on a starry night

Are beautiful and fair ;

The sunshine is a glorious birth ;

But yet I know, where’er I go,

That there hath past away a glory from the  
earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous  
song,

And while the young lambs bound

As to the tabor’s sound,

To me alone there came a thought of grief :

A timely utterance gave that thought relief,

And I again am strong :

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the  
steep ;

No more shall grief of mine the season  
wrong ;

I hear the Echoes through the mountains  
throng,

The Winds come to me from the fields of  
sleep,

And all the earth is gay ;

Land and sea

Give themselves up to jollity,

And with the heart of May

Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—

Thou Child of Joy,

Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,  
thou happy

Shepherd-boy !

IV

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call

Ye to each other make ; I see

The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;

My heart is at your festival,

My head hath its coronal,

The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.

Oh evil day ! if I were sullen  
While Earth herself is adorning,

This sweet May-morning,

And the Children are culling

On every side,

In a thousand valleys far and wide,

Fresh flowers; while the sun shines  
warm,

And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's  
arm :—

I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !

—But there's a Tree, of many, one,

A single Field which I have looked upon,

Both of them speak of something that is  
gone :

The Pansy at my feet

Doth the same tale repeat :

Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?

Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :

The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,

Hath had elsewhere its setting,

And cometh from afar :

Not in entire forgetfulness,

And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come

From God, who is our home :

Heaven lies about us in our infancy !

Shades of the prison-house begin to close

Upon the growing Boy,

But He beholds the light, and whence it  
flows,

He sees it in his joy ;

The Youth, who daily farthest from the east

Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,

And by the vision splendid

Is on his way attended ;

At length the Man perceives it die away,

And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;

Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,

And, even with something of a Mother's  
mind,

And no unworthy aim,

The homely Nurse doth all she can

To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,

Forget the glories he hath known,

And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born  
blisses,

A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !

See, where 'mid work of his own hand he  
lies,

Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
With light upon him from his father's eyes !

See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,  
Some fragment from his dream of human

life,

Shaped by himself with newly-learned art ;

A wedding or a festival,

A mourning or a funeral ;

And this hath now his heart,

And unto this he frames his song :

Then will he fit his tongue

To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;

But it will not be long

Ere this be thrown aside,

And with new joy and pride

The little Actor cons another part ;

Filling from time to time his "humorous  
stage"

With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,

That Life brings with her in her equipage ;

As if his whole vocation

Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
Thy Soul's immensity ;

Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep

Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,

That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal  
deep,

Haunted by ever by the eternal mind,—

Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !

On whom those truths do rest,

Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;

Thou, over whom thy Immortality

Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,

A Presence which is not to be put by ;

Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might

Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's  
height,

Why with such earnest pains dost thou  
provoke

The years to bring the inevitable yoke,

Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?

Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly  
freight,

And custom lie upon thee with a weight,  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

## IX

O joy ! that in our embers  
Is something that doth live,  
That nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth  
breed

Perpetual benediction : not indeed  
For that which is most worthy to be blest—  
Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his  
breast :—

Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise ;  
But for those obstinate questionings  
Of sense and outward things,  
Fallings from us, vanishings ;  
Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realised,  
High instincts before which our mortal  
Nature

Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :

But for those first affections,

Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,

Are yet the fountain light of all our day,

Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;

Uphold us, cherish, and have power to  
make

Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,

To perish never ;

Which neither listlessness, nor mad en-  
deavour,

Nor Man nor Boy,

Nor all that is at enmity with joy,

Can utterly abolish or destroy !

Hence in a season of calm weather

Though inland far we be,

Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither,

Can in a moment travel thither,

And see the Children sport upon the shore,

And hear the mighty waters rolling ever-  
more.

## X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous  
song !

And let the young Lambs bound  
As to the tabor's sound !

We in thought will join your throng,

Ye that pipe and ye that play,

Ye that through your hearts to-day

Feel the gladness of the May !

What though the radiance which was once  
so bright

Be now for ever taken from my sight,

Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the  
flower ;

We will grieve not, rather find

Strength in what remains behind ;

In the primal sympathy

Which having been must ever be ;

In the soothing thoughts that spring

Out of human suffering ;

In the faith that looks through death,  
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

## XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and  
Groves,

Forebode not any severing of our loves !

Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;

I only have relinquished one delight

To live beneath your more habitual sway.

I love the Brooks which down their channels  
fret,

Even more than when I tripped lightly as  
they ;

The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
Is lovely yet ;

The Clouds that gather round the setting sun

Do take a sober colouring from an eye

That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;

Another race hath been, and other palms  
are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which we  
live,

Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,

To me the meanest flower that blows can  
give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for  
tears.

1803-6.

A PROPHECY. FEBRUARY 1807.

HIGH deeds, O Germans, are to come  
from you !

Thus in your books the record shall be  
found,

"A watchword was pronounced, a potent sound—

ARMINIUS!—all the people quaked like dew

Stirred by the breeze ; they rose, a Nation, true,

True to herself—the mighty Germany,  
She of the Danube and the Northern Sea,  
She rose, and off at once the yoke she threw.

All power was given her in the dreadful trance ;

Those new-born Kings she withered like a flame."

—Woe to them all ! but heaviest woe and shame

To that Bavarian who could first advance  
His banner in accursed league with France,

First open traitor to the German name !

#### THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND

This was composed while pacing to and fro between the Hall of Coleorton, then rebuilding, and the principal Farm-house of the Estate, in which we lived for nine or ten months. I will here mention that the Song on the Restoration of Lord Clifford, as well as that on the feast of Brougham Castle, were produced on the same ground.

Two Voices are there ; one is of the sea,  
One of the mountains ; each a mighty Voice :

In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !

There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee  
Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :

Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,

Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.  
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :

Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;

For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be

That Mountain floods should thunder as before,

And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee !

1807.

#### TO THOMAS CLARKSON

ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE BILL FOR  
THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE

MARCH 1807

CLARKSON ! it was an obstinate hill to climb :

How toilsome—nay, how dire—it was, by thee

Is known ; by none, perhaps, so feelingly :  
But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,

Didst first lead forth that enterprise sublime,

Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,

Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,

First roused thee.—O true yoke-fellow of Time,

Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn !

The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn ;

And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's calm,

A great man's happiness ; thy zeal shall find  
Repose at length, firm friend of human kind !

#### THE MOTHER'S RETURN<sup>1</sup>

BY MY SISTER

Written at Town-end, Grasmere.

A MONTH, sweet Little-ones, is past  
Since your dear Mother went away,—  
And she to-morrow will return ;  
To-morrow is the happy day.

O blessed tidings ! thought of joy !  
The eldest heard with steady glee ;  
Silent he stood ; then laughed amain,—  
And shouted, "Mother, come to me."

Louder and louder did he shout,  
With witless hope to bring her near ;  
"Nay, patience ! patience, little boy !  
Your tender mother cannot hear."

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

I told of hills, and far-off towns,  
And long, long vales to travel through ;—  
He listens, puzzled, sore perplexed,  
But he submits ; what can he do ?

No strife disturbs his sister's breast ;  
She wars not with the mystery  
Of time and distance, night and day ;  
The bonds of our humanity.

Her joy is like an instinct, joy  
Of kitten, bird, or summer fly ;  
She dances, runs without an aim,  
She chatters in her ecstasy.

Her brother now takes up the note,  
And echoes back his sister's glee ;  
They hug the infant in my arms,  
As if to force his sympathy.

Then, settling into fond discourse,  
We rested in the garden bower ;  
While sweetly shone the evening sun  
In his departing hour.

We told o'er all that we had done,—  
Our rambles by the swift brook's side  
Far as the willow-skirted pool,  
Where two fair swans together glide.

We talked of change, of winter gone,  
Of green leaves on the hawthorn spray,  
Of birds that build their nests and sing,  
And all "since Mother went away!"

To her these tales they will repeat,  
To her our new-born tribes will show,  
The goslings green, the ass's colt,  
The lambs that in the meadow go.

—But, see, the evening star comes forth !  
To bed the children must depart ;  
A moment's heaviness they feel,  
A sadness at the heart :

"Tis gone—and in a merry fit  
They run upstairs in gamesome race ;  
I, too, infected by their mood,  
I could have joined the wanton chase.

Five minutes past—and, O the change !  
Asleep upon their beds they lie ;  
Their busy limbs in perfect rest,  
And closed the sparkling eye. 1807.

## GIPSIES

Composed at Coleorton. I had observed them,  
as here described, near Castle Donnington, on  
my way to and from Derby.

YET are they here the same unbroken knot  
Of human Beings, in the self-same spot !

Men, women, children, yea the frame  
Of the whole spectacle the same !

Only their fire seems bolder, yielding light,  
Now deep and red, the colouring of night ;

That on their Gipsy-faces falls,  
Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.

—Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours  
are gone, while I

Have been a traveller under open sky,  
Much witnessing of change and cheer,  
Yet as I left I find them here !

The weary Sun betook himself to rest ;—  
Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,

Outshining like a visible God  
The glorious path in which he trod.

And now, ascending, after one dark hour  
And one night's diminution of her power,

Behold the mighty Moon ! this way  
She looks as if at them—but they  
Regard not her :—oh better wrong and  
strife

(By nature transient) than this torpid life ;  
Life which the very stars reprove

As on their silent tasks they move !  
Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or earth !  
In scorn I speak not ;—they are what their  
birth

And breeding suffer them to be ;  
Wild outcasts of society! 1807.

"O NIGHTINGALE! THOU  
SURELY ART"

Written at Town-end, Grasmere. (*Mrs. W. says  
in a note—*"AT COLEORTON.")

O NIGHTINGALE ! thou surely art  
A creature of a "fiery heart" :—  
These notes of thine—they pierce and  
pierce ;

Tumultuous harmony and fierce !  
Thou sing'st as if the God of wine  
Had helped thee to a Valentine ;  
A song in mockery and despite  
Of shades, and dews, and silent night ;  
And steady bliss, and all the loves  
Now sleeping in these peaceful groves.

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say  
 His homely tale, this very day;  
 His voice was buried among trees,  
 Yet to be come at by the breeze:  
 He did not cease; but cooed—and cooed;  
 And somewhat pensively he wooed:  
 He sang of love, with quiet blending,  
 Slow to begin, and never ending;  
 Of serious faith, and inward glee;  
 That was the song—the song for me!

1807.

## TO LADY BEAUMONT

The winter garden of Coleorton, fashioned out  
 of an old quarry under the superintendence and  
 direction of Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister  
 Dorothy, during the winter and spring we resided  
 there.

LADY! the songs of Spring were in the  
 grove

While I was shaping beds for winter flowers;  
 While I was planting green unfading  
 bowers,

And shrubs—to hang upon the warm al-  
 cove,

And sheltering wall; and still, as Fancy  
 wove

The dream, to time and nature's blended  
 powers

I gave this paradise for winter hours,  
 A labyrinth, Lady! which your feet shall  
 rove.

Yes! when the sun of life more feebly  
 shines,

Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn  
 gloom

Or of high gladness you shall hither bring;  
 And these perennial bowers and murmuring  
 pines

Be gracious as the music and the bloom  
 And all the mighty ravishment of spring.

1807.

“THOUGH NARROW BE THAT  
 OLD MAN'S CARES”

“—gives to airy nothing  
 A local habitation and a name.”

Written at Coleorton. This old man's name  
 was Mitchell. He was, in all his ways and con-  
 versation, a great curiosity, both individually and  
 as a representative of past times. His chief em-

ployment was keeping watch at night by pacing  
 round the house, at that time building, to keep  
 off depredators. He has often told me gravely of  
 having seen the Seven Whistlers and the Hounds  
 as here described. Among the groves of Cole-  
 orton, where I became familiar with the habits  
 and notions of old Mitchell, there was also a  
 labourer of whom, I regret, I had no personal  
 knowledge; for, more than forty years after,  
 when he was become an old man, I learnt that  
 while I was composing verses, which I usually  
 did aloud, he took much pleasure, unknown to  
 me, in following my steps that he might catch  
 the words I uttered; and, what is not a little  
 remarkable, several lines caught in this way kept  
 their place in his memory. My volumes have  
 lately been given to him by my informant, and  
 surely he must have been gratified to meet in  
 print his old acquaintances.

THOUGH narrow be that old Man's cares,  
 and near,

The poor old Man is greater than he seems:  
 For he hath waking empire, wide as dreams;  
 An ample sovereignty of eye and ear.

Rich are his walks with supernatural cheer;  
 The region of his inner spirit teems  
 With vital sounds and monitory gleams  
 Of high astonishment and pleasing fear.

He the seven birds hath seen, that never  
 part,

Seen the SEVEN WHISTLERS in their nightly  
 rounds,

And counted them: and oftentimes will  
 start—

For overhead are sweeping GABRIEL'S  
 HOUNDS

Doomed, with their impious Lord, the  
 flying Hart

To chase for ever, on aerial grounds!

1807.

SONG AT THE  
 FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIF-  
 FORD, THE SHEPHERD, TO THE ESTATES  
 AND HONOURS OF HIS ANCESTORS

See the note. This poem was composed at  
 Coleorton while I was walking to and fro along  
 the path that led from Sir George Beaumont's  
 Farm-house, where we resided, to the Hall which  
 was building at that time

HIGH in the breathless Hall the Minstrel  
 sate,



And Emont's murmur mingled with the  
Song.—

The words of ancient time I thus translate,  
A festal strain that hath been silent long:—  
"From town to town, from tower to tower,  
The red rose is a glad some flower.  
Her thirty years of winter past,  
The red rose is revived at last;  
She lifts her head for endless spring,  
For everlasting blossoming:  
Both roses flourish, red and white:  
In love and sisterly delight  
The two that were at strife are blended,  
And all old troubles now are ended.—  
Joy! joy to both! but most to her  
Who is the flower of Lancaster!  
Behold her how She smiles to-day  
On this great throng, this bright array!  
Fair greeting doth she send to all  
From every corner of the hall;  
But chiefly from above the board  
Where sits in state our rightful Lord,  
A Clifford to his own restored!

They came with banner, spear, and shield,  
And it was proved in Bosworth-field.  
Not long the Avenger was withstood—  
Earth helped him with the cry of blood:<sup>1</sup>  
St. George was for us, and the might  
Of blessed Angels crowned the right.  
Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,  
We loudest in the faithful north:  
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,  
Our streams proclaim a welcoming;  
Our strong-abodes and castles see  
The glory of their loyalty.

How glad is Skipton at this hour—  
Though lonely, a deserted Tower;  
Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and  
groom:

We have them at the feast of Brough'm.  
How glad Pendragon—though the sleep  
Of years be on her!—She shall reap  
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing  
As in a dream her own renewing.  
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem  
Beside her little humble stream;  
And she that keepeth watch and ward  
Her statelier Eden's course to guard;  
They both are happy at this hour,  
Though each is but a lonely Tower:—  
But here is perfect joy and pride  
For one fair House by Emont's side,  
This day, distinguishing without peer

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

To see her Master and to cheer—  
Him, and his Lady-mother dear!

Oh! it was a time forlorn  
When the fatherless was born—  
Give her wings that she may fly,  
Or she sees her infant die!  
Swords that are with slaughter wild  
Hunt the Mother and the Child.  
Who will take them from the light?  
—Yonder is a man in sight—  
Yonder is a house—but where?  
No, they must not enter there.  
To the caves, and to the brooks,  
To the clouds of heaven she looks;  
She is speechless, but her eyes  
Pray in ghostly agonies.  
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,  
Maid and Mother undefiled,  
Save a Mother and her Child!

Now Who is he that bounds with joy  
On Carrock's side, a Shepherd-boy?  
No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass  
Light as the wind along the grass.  
Can this be He who hither came  
In secret, like a smothered flame?  
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed  
For shelter, and a poor man's bread!  
God loves the Child; and God hath willed  
That those dear words should be fulfilled,  
The Lady's words, when forced away,  
The last she to her Babe did say:  
'My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest  
I may not be; but rest thee, rest,  
For lowly shepherd's life is best!'

Alas! when evil men are strong  
No life is good, no pleasure long.  
The Boy must part from Mosedale's  
groves,

And leave Blencathara's rugged coves,  
And quit the flowers that summer brings  
To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;  
Must vanish, and his careless cheer  
Be turned to heaviness and fear.  
—Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise!  
Hear it, good man, old in days!  
Thou tree of covert and of rest  
For this young Bird that is distress;  
Among thy branches safe he lay,  
And he was free to sport and play,  
When falcons were abroad for prey.

A recreant harp, that sings of fear  
And heaviness in Clifford's ear!  
I said, when evil men are strong,  
No life is good, no pleasure long,

A weak and cowardly untruth !  
 Our Clifford was a happy Youth,  
 And thankful through a weary time,  
 That brought him up to manhood's prime.  
 —Again he wanders forth at will,  
 And tends a flock from hill to hill:  
 His garb is humble; ne'er was seen  
 Such garb with such a noble mien;  
 Among the shepherd grooms no mate  
 Hath he, a Child of strength and state !  
 Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,  
 Nor yet for higher sympathy.  
 To his side the fallow-deer  
 Came, and rested without fear;  
 The eagle, lord of land and sea,  
 Stooped down to pay him fealty;  
 And both the undying fish that swim<sup>1</sup>  
 Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him;  
 The pair were servants of his eye  
 In their immortality;  
 And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,  
 Moved to and fro, for his delight.  
 He knew the rocks which Angels haunt  
 Upon the mountains visitant;  
 He hath kenned them taking wing:  
 And into caves where Faeries sing  
 He hath entered; and been told  
 By Voices how men lived of old.  
 Among the heavens his eye can see  
 The face of thing that is to be;  
 And, if that men report him right,  
 His tongue could whisper words of might.  
 —Now another day is come,  
 Fitter hope, and nobler doom;  
 He hath thrown aside his crook,  
 And hath buried deep his book;  
 Armour rusting in his halls  
 On the blood of Clifford calls;—<sup>1</sup>  
 'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the Lance—  
 Bear me to the heart of France,  
 Is the longing of the Shield—  
 Tell thy name, thou trembling Field;  
 Field of death, where'er thou be,  
 Groan thou with our victory !  
 Happy day, and mighty hour,  
 When our Shepherd, in his power,  
 Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,  
 To his ancestors restored  
 Like a re-appearing Star,  
 Like a glory from afar,  
 First shall head the flock of war !"

Alas ! the impassioned minstrel did not  
 know

How, by Heaven's grace, this Clifford's  
 heart was framed,  
 How he, long forced in humble walks to go,  
 Was softened into feeling, soothed, and  
 tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor men  
 lie;  
 His daily teachers had been woods and  
 rills,  
 The silence that is in the starry sky,  
 The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race,  
 Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were  
 dead:  
 Nor did he change; but kept in lofty place  
 The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage  
 hearth;  
 The Shepherd-lord was honoured more and  
 more;  
 And, ages after he was laid in earth,  
 "The good Lord Clifford" was the name  
 he bore. 1807.

## THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE

### OR, THE FATE OF THE NORTONS<sup>1</sup>

The earlier half of this Poem was composed at Stockton-upon-Tees, when Mrs. Wordsworth and I were on a visit to her eldest Brother, Mr. Hutchinson, at the close of the year 1807. The country is flat, and the weather was rough. I was accustomed every day to walk to and fro under the shelter of a row of stacks in a field at a small distance from the town, and there poured forth my verses aloud as freely as they would come. Mrs. Wordsworth reminds me that her brother stood upon the punctilio of not sitting down to dinner till I joined the party; and it frequently happened that I did not make my appearance till too late, so that she was made uncomfortable. I here beg her pardon for this and similar transgressions during the whole course of our wedded life. To my beloved Sister the same apology is due.

When, from the visit just mentioned, we returned to Town-end, Grasmere, I proceeded with the Poem; and it may be worth while to note, as a caution to others who may cast their eye on these memoranda, that the skin having been rubbed off my heel by my wearing too tight a shoe, though I desisted from walking I found

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

that the irritation of the wounded part was kept up, by the act of composition, to a degree that made it necessary to give my constitution a holiday. A rapid cure was the consequence. Poetic excitement, when accompanied by protracted labour in composition, has throughout my life brought on more or less bodily derangement. Nevertheless, I am, at the close of my seventy-third year, in what may be called excellent health; so that intellectual labour is not necessarily unfavourable to longevity. But perhaps I ought here to add that mine has been generally carried on out of doors.

Let me here say a few words of this Poem in the way of criticism. The subject being taken from feudal times has led to its being compared to some of Walter Scott's poems that belong to the same age and state of society. The comparison is inconsiderate. Sir Walter pursued the customary and very natural course of conducting an action, presenting various turns of fortune, to some outstanding point on which the mind might rest as a termination or catastrophe. The course I attempted to pursue is entirely different. Everything that is attempted by the principal personages in "The White Doe" fails, so far as its object is external and substantial. So far as it is moral and spiritual it succeeds. The Heroine of the Poem knows that her duty is not to interfere with the current of events, either to forward or delay them, but

"To abide  
The shock, and finally secure  
O'er pain and grief a triumph pure."

This she does in obedience to her brother's injunction, as most suitable to a mind and character that, under previous trials, had been proved to accord with his. She achieves this not without aid from the communication with the inferior Creature, which often leads her thoughts to revolve upon the past with a tender and humanising influence that exalts rather than depresses her. The anticipated beatification, if I may so say, of her mind, and the apotheosis of the companion of her solitude, are the points at which the Poem aims, and constitute its legitimate catastrophe, far too spiritual a one for instant or widely-spread sympathy, but not therefore the less fitted to make a deep and permanent impression upon that class of minds who think and feel more independently, than the many do, of the surfaces of things and interests transitory because belonging more to the outward and social forms of life than to its internal spirit. How insignificant a thing, for example, does personal prowess appear compared with the fortitude of patience and heroic martyrdom: in other words, with struggles

for the sake of principle, in preference to victory gloried in for its own sake.

### ADVERTISEMENT

During the Summer of 1807 I visited, for the first time, the beautiful country that surrounds Bolton Priory, in Yorkshire; and the Poem of "The White Doe," founded upon a Tradition connected with that place, was composed at the close of the same year.

### DEDICATION

In trellised shed with clustering roses gay,  
And, MARY! oft beside our blazing fire,  
When years of wedded life were as a day  
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,  
Did we together read in Spenser's Lay  
How Una, sad of soul—in sad attire,  
The gentle Una, of celestial birth,  
To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the earth.

Ah, then, Belovèd! pleasing was the smart,  
And the tear precious in compassion shed  
For Her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,  
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited;  
Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart  
The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led,—  
And faithful, loyal in her innocence,  
Like the brave Lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a faery shell  
Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught;  
Free Fancy prized each specious miracle,  
And all its finer inspiration caught;  
Till in the bosom of our rustic Cell,  
We by a lamentable change were taught  
That "bliss with mortal Man may not abide:"  
How nearly joy and sorrow are allied!

For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow,  
For us the voice of melody was mute.  
—But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow,  
And give the timid herbage leave to shoot,  
Heaven's breathing influence failed not to bestow  
A timely promise of unlooked-for fruit,  
Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content  
From blossoms wild of fancies innocent.

It soothed us—it beguiled us—then, to hear  
Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell;  
And griefs whose aery motion comes not near  
The pangs that tempt the Spirit to rebel:  
Then, with mild Una in her sober cheer,  
High over hill and low adown the dell  
Again we wandered, willing to partake  
All that she suffered for her dear Lord's sake.

Then, too, this Song of mine once more could  
please,  
Where anguish, strange as dreams of restless  
sleep,

Is tempered and allayed by sympathies  
Aloft ascending, and descending deep,  
Even to the inferior Kinds ; whom forest-trees  
Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep  
Of the sharp winds ;—fair Creatures !—to whom  
Heaven

A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given.

This tragic Story cheered us ; for it speaks  
Of female patience winning firm repose ;  
And, of the recompense that conscience seeks,  
A bright, encouraging, example shows ;  
Needful when o'er wide realms the tempest  
breaks,

Needful amid life's ordinary woes ;—  
Hence, not for them unfitted who would bless  
A happy hour with holier happiness.

He serves the Muses erringly and ill,  
Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive :  
Oh, that my mind were equal to fulfil  
The comprehensive mandate which they give—  
Vain aspiration of an earnest will !  
Yet in this moral Strain a power may live,  
Belovèd Wife ! such solace to impart  
As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,  
April 20, 1815.

“ Action is transitory—a step, a blow,  
The motion of a muscle—this way or that—  
'Tis done ; and in the after-vacancy  
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed :  
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,  
And has the nature of infinity.<sup>1</sup>  
Yet through that darkness (infinite though it seem  
And irremovable) gracious openings lie,  
By which the soul—with patient steps of thought  
Now toiling, wafted now on wings of prayer—  
May pass in hope, and, though from mortal bonds  
Yet undelivered, rise with sure ascent  
Even to the fountain-head of peace divine.”

“ They that deny a God, destroy Man's nobility:  
for certainly Man is of kinn to the Beast by his  
Body ; and if he be not of kinn to God by his  
Spirit, he is a base, ignoble Creature. It destroys  
likewise Magnanimity, and the raising of humane  
Nature : for take an example of a Dogg, and  
mark what a generosity and courage he will put  
on, when he finds himself maintained by a Man,  
who to him is instead of a God, or Melior Natura.  
Which courage is manifestly such, as that Crea-

ture without that confidence of a better Nature  
than his own could never attain. So Man, when  
he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine  
protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith  
which human Nature in itself could not obtain.”

LORD BACON.

### CANTO FIRST

FROM Bolton's old monastic tower<sup>1</sup>  
The bells ring loud with gladsome power ;  
The sun shines bright ; the fields are gay  
With people in their best array  
Of stole and doublet, hood and scarf,  
Along the banks of crystal Wharf,  
Through the Vale retired and lowly,  
Trooping to that summons holy.  
And, up among the moorlands, see  
What sprinklings of blithe company !  
Of lasses and of shepherd grooms,  
That down the steep hills force their way,  
Like cattle through the budded brooms ;  
Path, or no path, what care they ?  
And thus in joyous mood they hie  
To Bolton's mouldering Priory.

What would they there?—Full fifty years  
That sumptuous Pile, with all its peers,  
Too harshly hath been doomed to taste  
The bitterness of wrong and waste :  
Its courts are ravaged ; but the tower  
Is standing with a voice of power,  
That ancient voice which wont to call  
To mass or some high festival ;  
And in the shattered fabric's heart  
Remaineth one protected part ;  
A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest,<sup>1</sup>  
Closely embowered and trimly drest ;  
And thither young and old repair,  
This Sabbath-day, for praise and prayer.

Fast the churchyard fills ;—anon  
Look again, and they all are gone ;  
The cluster round the porch, and the folk  
Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak !<sup>1</sup>  
And scarcely have they disappeared  
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard :—  
With one consent the people rejoice,  
Filling the church with a lofty voice !  
They sing a service which they feel :  
For 'tis the sunrise now of zeal ;  
Of a pure faith the vernal prime—  
In great Eliza's golden time.

A moment ends the fervent din,  
And all is hushed, without and within ;  
For though the priest, more tranquilly,  
Recites the holy liturgy,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

The only voice which you can hear  
Is the river murmuring near.  
—When soft!—the dusky trees between,  
And down the path through the open green,  
Where is no living thing to be seen;  
And through yon gateway, where is found,  
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,  
Free entrance to the churchyard ground—  
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,  
Comes gliding in serene and slow,  
Soft and silent as a dream,  
A solitary Doe!

White she is as lily of June,  
And beauteous as the silver moon  
When out of sight the clouds are driven  
And she is left alone in heaven;  
Or like a ship some gentle day  
In sunshine sailing far away,  
A glittering ship, that hath the plain  
Of ocean for her own domain.

Lie silent in your graves, ye dead!  
Lie quiet in your churchyard bed!  
Ye living, tend your holy cares;  
Ye multitude, pursue your prayers;  
And blame not me if my heart and sight  
Are occupied with one delight!  
'Tis a work for sabbath hours  
If I with this bright Creature go:  
Whether she be of forest bowers,  
From the bowers of earth below;  
Or a Spirit for one day given,  
A pledge of grace from purest heaven.

What harmonious pensive changes  
Wait upon her as she ranges  
Round and through this Pile of state  
Overthrown and desolate!  
Now a step or two her way  
Leads through space of open day,  
Where the enamoured sunny light  
Brightens her that was so bright;  
Now doth a delicate shadow fall,  
Falls upon her like a breath,  
From some lofty arch or wall,  
As she passes underneath:  
Now some gloomy nook partakes  
Of the glory that she makes,—  
High-ribbed vault of stone, or cell,  
With perfect cunning framed as well  
Of stone, and ivy, and the spread  
Of the elder's bushy head;  
Some jealous and forbidding cell,  
That doth the living stars repel,  
And where no flower hath leave to dwell.

The presence of this wandering Doe

Fills many a damp obscure recess  
With lustre of a saintly show;  
And, reappearing, she no less  
Sheds on the flowers that round her blow  
A more than sunny liveliness.  
But say, among these holy places,  
Which thus assiduously she paces,  
Comes she with a votary's task,  
Rite to perform, or boon to ask?  
Fair Pilgrim! harbours she a sense  
Of sorrow, or of reverence?  
Can she be grieved for quire or shrine,  
Crushed as if by wrath divine?  
For what survives of house where God  
Was worshipped, or where Man abode;  
For old magnificence undone;  
Or for the gentler work begun  
By Nature, softening and concealing,  
And busy with a hand of healing?  
Mourns she for lordly chamber's hearth  
That to the sapling ash gives birth;  
For dormitory's length laid bare  
Where the wild rose blossoms fair;  
Or altar, whence the cross was rent,  
Now rich with mossy ornament?

—She sees a warrior carved in stone,  
Among the thick weeds, stretched alone;  
A warrior, with his shield of pride  
Cleaving humbly to his side,  
And hands in resignation prest,  
Palm to palm, on his tranquil breast;  
As little she regards the sight  
As a common creature might:  
If she be doomed to inward care,  
Or service, it must lie elsewhere.

—But hers are eyes serenely bright,  
And on she moves—with pace how light!  
Nor spares to stoop her head, and taste  
The dewy turf with flowers bestrown;  
And thus she fares, until at last  
Beside the ridge of a grassy grave  
In quietness she lays her down;  
Gentle as a weary wave  
Sinks, when the summer breeze hath died,  
Against an anchored vessel's side;  
Even so, without distress, doth she  
Lie down in peace, and lovingly.

The day is placid in its going,  
To a lingering motion bound,  
Like the crystal stream now flowing  
With its softest summer sound:  
So the balmy minutes pass,  
While this radiant Creature lies  
Couched upon the dewy grass,

Pensively with downcast eyes.  
 —But now again the people raise  
 With awful cheer a voice of praise;  
 It is the last, the parting song;  
 And from the temple forth they throng,  
 And quickly spread themselves abroad,  
 While each pursues his several road.  
 But some—a variegated band  
 Of middle-aged, and old, and young,  
 And little children by the hand  
 Upon their leading mothers hung—  
 With mute obeisance gladly paid  
 Turn towards the spot, where, full in view,  
 The white Doe, to her service true,  
 Her sabbath couch has made.

It was a solitary mound;  
 Which two spears' length of level ground  
 Did from all other graves divide:  
 As if in some respect of pride;  
 Or melancholy's sickly mood,  
 Still shy of human neighbourhood;  
 Or guilt, that humbly would express  
 A penitential loneliness.

"Look, there she is, my Child! draw near;

She fears not, wherefore should we fear?  
 She means no harm;"—but still the Boy,  
 To whom the words were softly said,  
 Hung back, and smiled, and blushed for joy,  
 A shame-faced blush of glowing red!  
 Again the Mother whispered low,  
 "Now you have seen the famous Doe;  
 From Rylstone she hath found her way  
 Over the hills this sabbath day  
 Her work, whate'er it be, is done,  
 And she will depart when we are gone;  
 Thus doth she keep, from year to year,  
 Her sabbath morning, foul or fair."

Bright was the Creature, as in dreams  
 The Boy had seen her, yea, more bright;  
 But is she truly what she seems?  
 He asks with insecure delight,  
 Asks of himself, and doubts,—and still  
 The doubt returns against his will:  
 Though he, and all the standers-by,  
 Could tell a tragic history  
 Of facts divulged, wherein appear  
 Substantial motive, reason clear,  
 Why thus the milk-white Doe is found  
 Couchant beside that lonely mound;  
 And why she duly loves to pace  
 The circuit of this hallowed place.  
 Nor to the Child's inquiring mind  
 Is such perplexity confined:

For, spite of sober Truth that sees  
 A world of fixed remembrances  
 Which to this mystery belong,  
 If, undeceived, my skill can trace  
 The characters of every face,  
 There lack not strange delusion here,  
 Conjecture vague, and idle fear,  
 And superstitious fancies strong,  
 Which do the gentle Creature wrong.

That bearded, staff-supported Sire—  
 Who in his boyhood often fed  
 Full cheerily on convent-bread  
 And heard old tales by the convent-fire,  
 And to his grave will go with scars,  
 Relics of long and distant wars—  
 That Old Man, studious to expound  
 The spectacle, is mounting high  
 To days of dim antiquity;  
 When Lady Aëliza mourned<sup>1</sup>  
 Her Son, and felt in her despair  
 The pang of unavailing prayer;  
 Her Son in Wharf's abysses drowned,  
 The noble Boy of Egremound.  
 From which affliction—when the grace  
 Of God had in her heart found place—  
 A pious structure, fair to see,  
 Rose up, this stately Priory!  
 The Lady's work;—but now laid low;  
 To the grief of her soul that doth come  
 and go,

In the beautiful form of this innocent Doe:  
 Which, though seemingly doomed in its  
 breast to sustain  
 A softened remembrance of sorrow and pain,  
 Is spotless, and holy, and gentle, and  
 bright;  
 And glides o'er the earth like an angel of  
 light.

Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door;<sup>1</sup>  
 And, through the chink in the fractured floor  
 Look down, and see a griesly sight;  
 A vault where the bodies are buried up-  
 right!

There, face by face, and hand by hand,  
 The Claphams and Mauleverers stand;  
 And, in his place, among son and sire,  
 Is John de Clapham, that fierce Esquire,  
 A valiant man, and a name of dread  
 In the ruthless wars of the White and Red;  
 Who dragged Earl Pembroke from Ban-  
 bury church  
 And smote off his head on the stones of  
 the porch!

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Look down among them, if you dare ;  
 Oft does the White Doe loiter there,  
 Prying into the darksome rent ;  
 Nor can it be with good intent :  
 So thinks that Dame of haughty air,  
 Who hath a Page her book to hold,  
 And wears a frontlet edged with gold.  
 Harsh thoughts with her high mood agree—  
 Who counts among her ancestry  
 Earl Pembroke, slain so impiously !

That slender Youth, a scholar pale,  
 From Oxford come to his native vale,  
 He also hath his own conceit :  
 It is, thinks he, the gracious Fairy,  
 Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet<sup>1</sup>  
 In his wanderings solitary :  
 Wild notes she in his hearing sang,  
 A song of Nature's hidden powers ;  
 That whistled like the wind, and rang  
 Among the rocks and holly bowers.  
 'Twas said that She all shapes could wear ;  
 And oftentimes before him stood,  
 Amid the trees of some thick wood,  
 In semblance of a lady fair ;  
 And taught him signs, and showed him  
 sights,

In Craven's dens, on Cumbrian heights ;  
 When under cloud of fear he lay,  
 A shepherd clad in homely grey ;  
 Nor left him at his later day.  
 And hence, when he, with spear and shield,  
 Rode full of years to Flodden-field,  
 His eye could see the hidden spring,  
 And how the current was to flow ;  
 The fatal end of Scotland's King,  
 And all that hopeless overthrow.  
 But not in wars did he delight,  
*This* Clifford wished for worthier might ;  
 Nor in broad pomp, or courtly state ;  
 Him his own thoughts did elevate,—  
 Most happy in the shy recess  
 Of Barden's lowly quietness.  
 And choice of studious friends had he  
 Of Bolton's dear fraternity ;  
 Who, standing on this old church tower,  
 In many a calm propitious hour,  
 Perused, with him, the starry sky ;  
 Or, in their cells, with him did pry  
 For other lore,—by keen desire  
 Urged to close toil with chemic fire ;  
 In quest belike of transmutations  
 Rich as the mine's most bright creations.  
 But they and their good works are fled,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

And all is now disquieted—  
 And peace is none, for living or dead !

Ah, pensive Scholar, think not so,  
 But look again at the radiant Doe !  
 What quiet watch she seems to keep,  
 Alone, beside that grassy heap !  
 Why mention other thoughts unmeet  
 For vision so composed and sweet ?  
 While stand the people in a ring,  
 Gazing, doubting, questioning ;  
 Yea, many overcome in spite  
 Of recollections clear and bright ;  
 Which yet do unto some impart  
 An undisturbed repose of heart.  
 And all the assembly own a law  
 Of orderly respect and awe ;  
 But see—they vanish one by one,  
 And last, the Doe herself is gone.

Harp ! we have been full long beguiled  
 By vague thoughts, lured by fancies wild ;  
 To which, with no reluctant strings,  
 Thou hast attuned thy murmurings ;  
 And now before this Pile we stand  
 In solitude, and utter peace :  
 But, Harp ! thy murmurs may not cease—  
 A Spirit, with his angelic wings,  
 In soft and breeze-like visitings,  
 Has touched thee—and a Spirit's hand :  
 A voice is with us—a command  
 To chant, in strains of heavenly glory,  
 A tale of tears, a mortal story !

## CANTO SECOND

THE Harp in lowliness obeyed ;  
 And first we sang of the greenwood shade  
 And a solitary Maid ;  
 Beginning, where the song must end,  
 With her, and with her sylvan Friend ;  
 The Friend who stood before her sight,  
 Her only unextinguished light ;  
 Her last companion in a dearth  
 Of love, upon a hopeless earth.

For She it was—this Maid, who wrought  
 Meekly, with foreboding thought,  
 In vermeil colours and in gold  
 An unblest work ; which, standing by,  
 Her Father did with joy behold,—  
 Exulting in its imagery ;  
 A Banner, fashioned to fulfil  
 Too perfectly his headstrong will :  
 For on this Banner had her hand  
 Embroidered (such her Sire's command)  
 The sacred Cross ; and figured there

The five dear wounds our Lord did bear ;  
Full soon to be uplifted high,  
And float in rueful company !

It was the time when England's Queen  
Twelve years had reigned, a Sovereign  
dread ;

Nor yet the restless crown had been  
Disturbed upon her virgin head ;  
But now the inly-working North  
Was ripe to send its thousands forth,  
A potent vassalage, to fight  
In Percy's and in Neville's right,  
Two Earls fast leagued in discontent,  
Who gave their wishes open vent ;  
And boldly urged a general plea,  
The rites of ancient piety  
To be triumphantly restored,  
By the stern justice of the sword !  
And that same Banner, on whose breast  
The blameless Lady had exprest  
Memorials chosen to give life  
And sunshine to a dangerous strife ;  
That Banner, waiting for the Call,  
Stood quietly in Rylstone-hall.

It came ; and Francis Norton said,  
" O Father ! rise not in this fray—  
The hairs are white upon your head ;  
Dear Father, hear me when I say  
It is for you too late a day !  
Bethink you of your own good name :  
A just and gracious Queen have we,  
A pure religion, and the claim  
Of peace on our humanity. —  
'Tis meet that I endure your scorn ;  
I am your son, your eldest born ;  
But not for lordship or for land,  
My Father, do I clasp your knees ;  
The Banner touch not, stay your hand,  
This multitude of men disband,  
And live at home in blameless ease ;  
For these my brethren's sake, for me ;  
And, most of all, for Emily ! "

Tumultuous noises filled the hall ;  
And scarcely could the Father hear  
That name—pronounced with a dying fall—  
The name of his only Daughter dear,  
As on the banner which stood near  
He glanced a look of holy pride,  
And his moist eyes were glorified ;  
Then did he seize the staff, and say :  
" Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's name,  
Keep thou this ensign till the day  
When I of thee require the same :  
Thy place be on my better hand ;—

And seven as true as thou, I see,  
Will cleave to this good cause and me."  
He spake, and eight brave sons straightway  
All followed him, a gallant band !

Thus, with his sons, when forth he came  
The sight was hailed with loud acclaim  
And din of arms and minstrelsy,  
From all his warlike tenantry,  
All horsed and harnessed with him to  
ride,—

A voice to which the hills replied !  
But Francis, in the vacant hall,  
Stood silent under dreary weight,—  
A phantasm, in which roof and wall  
Shook, tottered, swam before his sight ;  
A phantasm like a dream of night !  
Thus overwhelmed, and desolate,  
He found his way to a postern-gate ;  
And, when he waked, his languid eye  
Was on the calm and silent sky ;  
With air about him breathing sweet,  
And earth's green grass beneath his feet ;  
Nor did he fail ere long to hear  
A sound of military cheer,  
Faint—but it reached that sheltered spot ;  
He heard, and it disturbed him not.

There stood he, leaning on a lance  
Which he had grasped unknowingly,  
Had blindly grasped in that strong trance,  
That dimness of heart-agony ;  
There stood he, cleansed from the despair  
And sorrow of his fruitless prayer.  
The past he calmly hath reviewed :  
But where will be the fortitude  
Of this brave man, when he shall see  
That Form beneath the spreading tree,  
And know that it is Emily ?

He saw her where in open view  
She sate beneath the spreading yew—  
Her head upon her lap, concealing  
In solitude her bitter feeling :  
" Might ever son *command* a sire,  
The act were justified to-day."  
This to himself—and to the Maid,  
Whom now he had approached, he said—  
" Gone are they,—they have their desire ;  
And I with thee one hour will stay,  
To give thee comfort if I may."  
She heard, but looked not up, nor spake ;  
And sorrow moved him to partake  
Her silence ; then his thoughts turned  
round,

And fervent words a passage found.  
" Gone are they, bravely, though misled ;



With a dear Father at their head !  
 The Sons obey a natural lord ;  
 The Father had given solemn word  
 To noble Percy ; and a force  
 Still stronger, bends him to his course.  
 This said, our tears to-day may fall  
 As at an innocent funeral.  
 In deep and awful channel runs  
 This sympathy of Sire and Sons ;  
 Untried our Brothers have been loved  
 With heart by simple nature moved ;  
 And now their faithfulness is proved :  
 For faithful we must call them, bearing  
 That soul of conscientious daring.  
 —There were they all in circle—there  
 Stood Richard, Ambrose, Christopher,  
 John with a sword that will not fail,  
 And Marmaduke in fearless mail,  
 And those bright Twins were side by side ;  
 And there, by fresh hopes beautified,  
 Stood He, whose arm yet lacks the power  
 Of man, our youngest, fairest flower !  
 I, by the right of eldest born,  
 And in a second father's place,  
 Presumed to grapple with their scorn,  
 And meet their pity face to face ;  
 Yea, trusting in God's holy aid,  
 I to my Father knelt and prayed ;  
 And one, the pensive Marmaduke,  
 Methought, was yielding inwardly,  
 And would have laid his purpose by,  
 But for a glance of his Father's eye,  
 Which I myself could scarcely brook.

Then be we, each and all, forgiven !  
 Thou, chiefly thou, my Sister dear,  
 Whose pangs are registered in heaven—  
 The stifled sigh, the hidden tear,  
 And smiles, that dared to take their  
 place,

Meek filial smiles, upon thy face,  
 As that unhallowed Banner grew  
 Beneath a loving old Man's view.  
 Thy part is done—thy painful part ;  
 Be thou then satisfied in heart !  
 A further, though far easier, task  
 Than thine hath been, my duties ask ;  
 With theirs my efforts cannot blend,  
 I cannot for such cause contend ;  
 Their aims I utterly forswear ;  
 But I in body will be there,  
 Unarmed and naked will I go,  
 Be at their side, come weal or woe :  
 On kind occasions I may wait,  
 See, hear, obstruct, or mitigate.

Bare breast I take and an empty hand."<sup>1</sup>—  
 Therewith he threw away the lance,  
 Which he had grasped in that strong  
 trance,  
 Spurned it, like something that would  
 stand

Between him and the pure intent  
 Of love on which his soul was bent.

"For thee, for thee, is left the sense  
 Of trial past without offence  
 To God or man ; such innocence,  
 Such consolation, and the excess  
 Of an unmerited distress ;  
 In that thy very strength must lie.  
 —O Sister, I could prophesy !

The time is come that rings the knell  
 Of all we loved, and loved so well :  
 Hope nothing, if I thus may speak  
 To thee, a woman, and thence weak :  
 Hope nothing, I repeat ; for we  
 Are doomed to perish utterly :  
 'Tis meet that thou with me divide  
 The thought while I am by thy side,  
 Acknowledging a grace in this,  
 A comfort in the dark abyss.  
 But look not for me when I am gone,  
 And be no farther wrought upon :  
 Farewell all wishes, all debate,  
 All prayers for this cause, or for that !  
 Weep, if that aid thee ; but depend  
 Upon no help of outward friend ;  
 Espouse thy doom at once, and cleave  
 To fortitude without reprieve.  
 For we must fall, both we and ours—  
 This Mansion and these pleasant bowers,  
 Walks, pools, and arbours, homestead,  
 hall—

Our fate is theirs, will reach them all ;  
 The young horse must forsake his manger,  
 And learn to glory in a Stranger ;  
 The hawk forget his perch ; the hound  
 Be parted from his ancient ground :  
 The blast will sweep us all away—  
 One desolation, one decay !  
 And even this Creature!" which words  
 saying,

He pointed to a lovely Doe,  
 A few steps distant, feeding, straying ;  
 Fair creature, and more white than snow !  
 "Even she will to her peaceful woods  
 Return, and to her murmuring floods,  
 And be in heart and soul the same

<sup>1</sup> See the Old Ballad,—*"The Rising of the North."*

She was before she hither came ;  
 Ere she had learned to love us all,  
 Herself beloved in Rylstone-hall.  
 —But thou, my Sister, doomed to be  
 The last leaf on a blasted tree ;  
 If not in vain we breathed the breath  
 Together of a purer faith ;  
 If hand in hand we have been led,  
 And thou, (O happy thought this day :)  
 Not seldom foremost in the way ;  
 If on one thought our minds have fed,  
 And we have in one meaning read ;  
 If, when at home our private weal  
 Hath suffered from the shock of zeal,  
 Together we have learned to prize  
 Forbearance and self-sacrifice ;  
 If we like combatants have fared,  
 And for this issue been prepared ;  
 If thou art beautiful, and youth  
 And thought endure thee with all truth—  
 Be strong ;—be worthy of the grace  
 Of God, and fill thy destined place :  
 A Soul, by force of sorrows high,  
 Uplifted to the purest sky  
 Of undisturbed humanity !”

He ended,—or she heard no more ;  
 He led her from the yew-tree shade,  
 And at the mansion's silent door,  
 He kissed the consecrated Maid ;  
 And down the valley then pursued,  
 Alone, the armed Multitude.

## CANTO THIRD

Now joy for you who from the towers  
 Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear,<sup>1</sup>  
 Telling melancholy hours !  
 Proclaim it, let your Masters hear  
 That Norton with his band is near !  
 The watchmen from their station high  
 Pronounced the word,—and the Earls  
     descry,  
 Well-pleased, the armed Company  
 Marching down the banks of Were.  
 Said fearless Norton to the pair  
 Gone forth to greet him on the plain—  
 “This meeting, noble Lords ! looks fair,  
 I bring with me a goodly train ;  
 Their hearts are with you : hill and dale  
 Have helped us : Ure we crossed, and  
     Swale,  
 And horse and harness followed—see  
 The best part of their Yeomanry !

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

—Stand forth, my Sons !—these eight are  
     mine,  
 Whom to this service I commend ;  
 Which way soe'er our fate incline,  
 These will be faithful to the end ;  
 They are my all” — voice failed him  
     here—

“My all save one, a Daughter dear !  
 Whom I have left, Love's mildest birth,  
 The meekest Child on this blessed earth.  
 I had—but these are by my side,  
 These Eight, and this is a day of pride !  
 The time is ripe. With festive din  
 Lo ! how the people are flocking in,—  
 Like hungry fowl to the feeder's hand  
 When snow lies heavy upon the land.”

He spake bare truth ; for far and near  
 From every side came noisy swarms  
 Of Peasants in their homely gear ;  
 And, mixed with these, to Brancepeth  
     came

Grave Gentry of estate and name,  
 And Captains known for worth in arms  
 And prayed the Earls in self-defence  
 To rise, and prove their innocence.—  
 “Rise, noble Earls, put forth your might  
 For holy Church, and the People's right !”

The Norton fixed, at this demand,  
 His eye upon Northumberland,  
 And said ; “The Minds of Men will own  
 No loyal rest while England's Crown  
 Remains without an Heir, the bait  
 Of strife and factions desperate ;  
 Who, paying deadly hate in kind  
 Through all things else, in this can find  
 A mutual hope, a common mind ;  
 And plot, and pant to overwhelm  
 All ancient honour in the realm.  
 —Brave Earls ! to whose heroic veins  
 Our noblest blood is given in trust,  
 To you a suffering State complains,  
 And ye must raise her from the dust.  
 With wishes of still bolder scope  
 On you we look, with dearest hope ;  
 Even for our Altars—for the prize,  
 In Heaven, of life that never dies ;  
 For the old and holy Church we mourn,  
 And must in joy to her return.  
 Behold !”—and from his Son whose stand  
 Was on his right, from that guardian hand  
 He took the Banner, and unfurled  
 The precious folds—“behold,” said he,  
 “The ransom of a sinful world ;  
 Let this your preservation be ;

The wounds of hands and feet and side,  
And the sacred Cross on which Jesus died.  
—This bring I from an ancient hearth,  
These Records wrought in pledge of love  
By hands of no ignoble birth,  
A Maid o'er whom the blessed Dove  
Vouchsafed in gentleness to brood  
While she the holy work pursued."

"Uplift the Standard!" was the cry  
From all the listeners that stood round,  
"Plant it,—by this we live or die."

The Norton ceased not for that sound,  
But said; "The prayer which ye have heard,  
Much-injured Earls! by these preferred,  
Is offered to the Saints, the sigh  
Of tens of thousands, secretly."

"Uplift it!" cried once more the Band,  
And then a thoughtful pause ensued:  
"Uplift it!" said Northumberland—  
Whereat, from all the multitude  
Who saw the Banner reared on high  
In all its dread emblazonry,  
A voice of uttermost joy brake out:  
The transport was rolled down the river of  
Were,

And Durham, the time-honoured Durham,  
did hear,  
And the towers of Saint Cuthbert were  
stirred by the shout!

Now was the North in arms:—they shine  
In warlike trim from Tweed to Tyne,  
At Percy's voice: and Neville sees  
His Followers gathering in from Tees,  
From Were, and all the little rills  
Concealed among the forked hills—  
Seven hundred Knights, Retainers all  
Of Neville, at their Master's call  
Had sate together in Raby Hall!  
Such strength that Earldom held of yore;  
Nor wanted at this time rich store  
Of well-appointed chivalry.  
—Not loth the sleepy lance to wield,  
And greet the old paternal shield,  
They heard the summons;—and, further-  
more,

Horsemen and Foot of each degree,  
Unbound by pledge of fealty,  
Appeared, with free and open hate  
Of novelties in Church and State;  
Knight, burgher, yeoman, and esquire;  
And Romish priest, in priest's attire.  
And thus, in arms, a zealous Band  
Proceeding under joint command,  
To Durham first their course they bear;

And in Saint Cuthbert's ancient seat  
Sang mass,—and tore the book of prayer,—  
And trod the bible beneath their feet.

Thence marching southward smooth and  
free

"They mustered their host at Wetherby,  
Full sixteen thousand fair to see,"<sup>1</sup>  
The Choicest Warriors of the North!  
But none for beauty and for worth  
Like those eight Sons—who, in a ring,  
(Ripe men, or blooming in life's spring)  
Each with a lance, erect and tall,  
A falchion, and a buckler small,  
Stood by their Sire, on Clifford-moor,  
To guard the Standard which he bore.  
On foot they girt their Father round;  
And so will keep the appointed ground  
Where'er their march: no steed will he  
Henceforth bestride;—triumphantly,  
He stands upon the grassy sod,  
Trusting himself to the earth, and God.  
Rare sight to embolden and inspire!  
Proud was the field of Sons and Sire;  
Of him the most; and, sooth to say,  
No shape of man in all the array  
So graced the sunshine of that day.  
The monumental pomp of age  
Was with this goodly Personage;  
A stature undepressed in size,  
Unbent, which rather seemed to rise,  
In open victory o'er the weight  
Of seventy years, to loftier height;  
Magnific limbs of withered state;  
A face to fear and venerate;  
Eyes dark and strong; and on his head  
Bright locks of silver hair, thick spread,  
Which a brown morion half-concealed,  
Light as a hunter's of the field;  
And thus, with girdle round his waist,  
Whereon the Banner-staff might rest  
At need, he stood, advancing high  
The glittering, floating Pageantry.

Who sees him?—thousands see, and  
One

With unparticipated gaze;  
Who, 'mong those thousands, friend hath  
none,  
And treads in solitary ways.  
He, following wheresoe'er he might,  
Hath watched the Banner from afar,  
As shepherds watch a lonely star,  
Or mariners the distant light  
That guides them through a stormy night.

<sup>1</sup> From the old ballad.

And now, upon a chosen plot  
Of rising ground, yon heathy spot!  
He takes alone his far-off stand,  
With breast unmailed, unweaponed hand.  
Bold is his aspect; but his eye  
Is pregnant with anxiety,  
While, like a tutelary Power,  
He there stands fixed from hour to hour:  
Yet sometimes in more humble guise,  
Upon the turf-clad height he lies  
Stretched, herdsman-like, as if to bask  
In sunshine were his only task,  
Or by his mantle's help to find  
A shelter from the nipping wind:  
And thus, with short oblivion blest,  
His weary spirits gather rest.  
Again he lifts his eyes; and lo!  
The pageant glancing to and fro;  
And hope is awakened by the sight,  
He thence may learn, ere fall of night,  
Which way the tide is doomed to flow.

To London were the Chieftains bent;  
But what avails the bold intent?  
A Royal army is gone forth  
To quell the RISING OF THE NORTH;  
They march with Dudley at their head,  
And, in seven days' space, will to York be  
led!

Can such a mighty Host be raised  
Thus suddenly, and brought so near?  
The Earls upon each other gazed,  
And Neville's cheek grew pale with fear;  
For, with a high and valiant name,  
He bore a heart of timid frame;  
And bold if both had been, yet they  
"Against so many may not stay."<sup>1</sup>  
Back therefore will they hie to seize  
A strong Hold on the banks of Tees  
There wait a favourable hour,  
Until Lord Dacre with his power  
From Naworth come; and Howard's aid  
Be with them openly displayed.

While through the Host, from man to  
man,

A rumour of this purpose ran,  
The Standard trusting to the care  
Of him who heretofore did bear  
That charge, impatient Norton sought  
The Chieftains to unfold his thought,  
And thus abruptly spake;—"We yield  
(And can it be?) an unfought field!—  
How oft has strength, the strength of  
heaven,

<sup>1</sup> From the old ballad.

To few triumphantly been given!  
Still do our very children boast  
Of mitred Thurston—what a Host  
He conquered!<sup>2</sup>—Saw we not the Plain  
(And flying shall behold again)  
Where faith was proved?—while to battle  
moved

The Standard, on the Sacred Wain  
That bore it, compassed round by a bold  
Fraternity of Barons old;  
And with those grey-haired champions stood,  
Under the saintly ensigns three,  
The infant Heir of Mowbray's blood—  
All confident of victory!—  
Shall Percy blush, then, for his name?  
Must Westmoreland be asked with shame  
Whose were the numbers, where the loss,  
In that other day of Neville's Cross?<sup>2</sup>  
When the Prior of Durham with holy hand  
Raised, as the Vision gave command,  
Saint Cuthbert's Relic—far and near  
Kenned on the point of a lofty spear;  
While the Monks prayed in Maiden's Bower  
To God descending in his power.  
Less would not at our need be due  
To us, who war against the Untrue;—  
The delegates of Heaven we rise,  
Convoked the impious to chastise:  
We, we, the sanctities of old  
Would re-establish and uphold:  
Be warned!—His zeal the Chiefs con-  
founded,

But word was given, and the trumpet  
sounded:

Back through the melancholy Host  
Went Norton, and resumed his post.  
Alas! thought he, and have I borne  
This Banner raised with joyful pride,  
This hope of all posterity,  
By those dread symbols sanctified;  
Thus to become at once the scorn  
Of babbling winds as they go by,  
A spot of shame to the sun's bright eye,  
To the light clouds a mockery!  
—"Even these poor eight of mine would  
stem!"

Half to himself, and half to them  
He spake—"would stem, or quell, a force  
Ten times their number, man and horse:  
This by their own unaided might,  
Without their father in their sight,  
Without the Cause for which they fight;  
A Cause, which on a needful day

<sup>2</sup> See Note.

Would breed us thousands brave as they."

—So speaking, he his reverend head  
 Raised towards that Imagery once more :  
 But the familiar prospect shed  
 Despondency unfelt before :  
 A shock of intimations vain,  
 Dismay, and superstitious pain,  
 Fell on him, with the sudden thought  
 Of her by whom the work was wrought :—  
 Oh wherefore was her countenance bright  
 With love divine and gentle light ?  
 She would not, could not, disobey,  
 But her Faith leaned another way.  
 Ill tears she wept ; I saw them fall,  
 I overheard her as she spake  
 Sad words to that mute Animal,  
 The White Doe, in the hawthorn brake ;  
 She steeped, but not for Jesu's sake,  
 This Cross in tears : by her, and One  
 Unworthier far we are undone—  
 Her recreant Brother—he prevailed  
 Over that tender Spirit—assailed  
 Too oft, alas ! by her whose head  
 In the cold grave hath long been laid :  
 She first, in reason's dawn beguiled  
 Her docile, unsuspecting Child :  
 Far back—far back my mind must go  
 To reach the well-spring of this woe !

While thus he brooded, music sweet  
 Of border tunes was played to cheer  
 The footsteps of a quick retreat ;  
 But Norton lingered in the rear,  
 Stung with sharp thoughts ; and ere the last  
 From his distracted brain was cast,  
 Before his Father, Francis stood,  
 And spake in firm and earnest mood.

"Though here I bend a suppliant knee  
 In reverence, and unarmed, I bear  
 In your indignant thoughts my share ;  
 Am grieved this backward march to see  
 So careless and disorderly.  
 I scorn your Chiefs—men who would lead,  
 And yet want courage at their need :  
 Then look at them with open eyes !  
 Deserve they further sacrifice ?—  
 If—when they shrink, nor dare oppose  
 In open field their gathering foes,  
 (And fast, from this decisive day,  
 Yon multitude must melt away ;)  
 If now I ask a grace not claimed  
 While ground was left for hope ; unblamed  
 Be an endeavour that can do  
 No injury to them or you.  
 My Father ! I would help to find

A place of shelter, till the rage  
 Of cruel men do like the wind  
 Exhaust itself and sink to rest ;  
 Be Brother now to Brother joined !  
 Admit me in the equipage  
 Of your misfortunes, that at least,  
 Whatever fate remain behind,  
 I may bear witness in my breast  
 To your nobility of mind !"

"Thou Enemy, my bane and blight !  
 Oh ! bold to fight the Coward's fight  
 Against all good"—but why declare,  
 At length, the issue of a prayer  
 Which love had prompted, yielding scope  
 Too free to one bright moment's hope ?  
 Suffice it that the Son, who strove  
 With fruitless effort to allay  
 That passion, prudently gave way ;  
 Nor did he turn aside to prove  
 His Brothers' wisdom or their love—  
 But calmly from the spot withdrew ;  
 His best endeavours to renew,  
 Should e'er a kindlier time ensue.

#### CANTO FOURTH

'Tis night : in silence looking down,  
 The Moon, from cloudless ether, sees  
 A Camp, and a beleaguered Town,  
 And Castle, like a stately crown  
 On the steep rocks of winding Tees ;—  
 And southward far, with moor between,  
 Hill-top, and flood, and forest green,  
 The bright Moon sees that valley small  
 Where Rylstone's old sequestered Hall  
 A venerable image yields  
 Of quiet to the neighbouring fields ;  
 While from one pillared chimney breathes  
 The smoke, and mounts in silver wreaths.  
 —The courts are hushed ;—for timely sleep  
 The greyhounds to their kennel creep ;  
 The peacock in the broad ash tree  
 Aloft is roosted for the night,  
 He who in proud prosperity  
 Of colours manifold and bright  
 Walked round, affronting the daylight ;  
 And higher still, above the bower  
 Where he is perched, from yon lone Tower  
 The hall-clock in the clear moonshine  
 With glittering finger points at nine.  
 Ah ! who could think that sadness here  
 Hath any sway ? or pain, or fear ?  
 A soft and lulling sound is heard  
 Of streams inaudible by day ;

The garden pool's dark surface, stirred  
 By the night insects in their play,  
 Breaks into dimples small and bright ;  
 A thousand, thousand rings of light  
 That shape themselves and disappear  
 Almost as soon as seen :—and lo !  
 Not distant far, the milk-white Doe—  
 The same who quietly was feeding  
 On the green herb, and nothing heeding,  
 When Francis, uttering to the Maid  
 His last words in the yew-tree shade,  
 Involved whate'er by love was brought  
 Out of his heart, or crossed his thought,  
 Or chance presented to his eye,  
 In one sad sweep of destiny—  
 The same fair Creature, who hath found  
 Her way into forbidden ground ;  
 Where now—within this spacious plot  
 For pleasure made, a goodly spot,  
 With lawns and beds of flowers, and shades  
 Of trellis-work in long arcades,  
 And cirque and crescent framed by wall  
 Of close-clipt foliage green and tall,  
 Converging walks, and fountains gay,  
 And terraces in trim array—  
 Beneath yon cypress spiring high,  
 With pine and cedar spreading wide  
 Their darksome boughs on either side,  
 In open moonlight doth she lie ;  
 Happy as others of her kind,  
 That, far from human neighbourhood,  
 Range unrestricted as the wind,  
 Through park, or chase, or savage wood.

But see the consecrated Maid  
 Emerging from a cedar shade  
 To open moonshine, where the Doe  
 Beneath the cypress-spire is laid ;  
 Like a patch of April snow—  
 Upon a bed of herbage green,  
 Lingering in a woody glade  
 Or behind a rocky screen—  
 Lonely relic ! which, if seen  
 By the shepherd, is passed by  
 With an inattentive eye.  
 Nor more regard doth She bestow  
 Upon the uncomplaining Doe  
 Now couched at ease, though oft this day  
 Not unperplexed nor free from pain,  
 When she had tried, and tried in vain,  
 Approaching in her gentle way,  
 To win some look of love, or gain  
 Encouragement to sport or play  
 Attempts which still the heart-sick Maid  
 Rejected, or with slight repaid.

Yet Emily is soothed ;—the breeze  
 Came fraught with kindly sympathies.  
 As she approached yon rustic Shed  
 Hung with late-flowering woodbine, spread  
 Along the walls and overhead,  
 The fragrance of the breathing flowers  
 Revived a memory of those hours  
 When here, in this remote alcove,  
 (While from the pendent woodbine came  
 Like odours, sweet as if the same)  
 A fondly-anxious Mother strove  
 To teach her salutary fears  
 And mysteries above her years.  
 Yes, she is soothed : an Image faint,  
 And yet not faint—a presence bright  
 Returns to her—that blessed Saint  
 Who with mild looks and language mild  
 Instructed here her darling Child,  
 While yet a prattler on the knee,  
 To worship in simplicity  
 The invisible God, and take for guide  
 The faith reformed and purified.

'Tis flown—the Vision, and the sense  
 Of that beguiling influence,  
 " But oh ! thou Angel from above,  
 Mute Spirit of maternal love,  
 That stood'st before my eyes, more clear  
 Than ghosts are fabled to appear  
 Sent upon embassies of fear ;  
 As thou thy presence hast to me  
 Vouchsafed, in radiant ministry  
 Descend on Francis ; nor forbear  
 To greet him with a voice, and say ;—  
 ' If hope be a rejected stay,  
 ' Do thou, my christian Son, beware  
 ' Of that most lamentable snare,  
 ' The self-reliance of despair ! ' "

Then from within the embowered retreat  
 Where she had found a grateful seat  
 Perturbed she issues. She will go !  
 Herself will follow to the war,  
 And clasp her Father's knees ;—ah, no !  
 She meets the insuperable bar,  
 The injunction by her Brother laid ;  
 His parting charge—but ill obeyed—  
 That interdicted all debate,  
 All prayer for this cause or for that ;  
 All efforts that would turn aside  
 The headstrong current of their fate :  
*Her duty is to stand and wait ;*  
 In resignation to abide  
 The shock, AND FINALLY SECURE  
 O'ER PAIN AND GRIEF A TRIUMPH PURE.  
 —She feels it, and her pangs are checked.

But now, as silently she paced  
 The turf, and thought by thought was  
     chased,  
 Came One who, with sedate respect,  
 Approached, and, greeting her, thus spake;  
 "An old man's privilege I take:  
 Dark is the time—a woeful day!  
 Dear daughter of affliction, say  
 How can I serve you? point the way."

"Rights have you, and may well be  
     bold;

You with my Father have grown old  
 In friendship—strive—for his sake go—  
 Turn from us all the coming woe:  
 This would I beg; but on my mind  
 A passive stillness is enjoined.  
 On you, if room for mortal aid  
 Be left, is no restriction laid;  
 You not forbidden to recline  
 With hope upon the Will divine."

"Hope," said the old Man, "must  
     abide

With all of us, whate'er betide.  
 In Craven's Wilds is many a den,  
 To shelter persecuted men:  
 Far under ground is many a cave,  
 Where they might lie as in the grave,  
 Until this storm hath ceased to rave:  
 Or let them cross the River Tweed,  
 And be at once from peril freed!"

"Ah tempt me not!" she faintly sighed;  
 "I will not counsel nor exhort,  
 With my condition satisfied;  
 But you, at least, may make report  
 Of what befalls;—be this your task—  
 This may be done;—'tis all I ask!"

She spake—and from the Lady's sight  
 The Sire, unconscious of his age,  
 Departed promptly as a Page  
 Bound on some errand of delight.  
 —The noble Francis—wise as brave,  
 Thought he, may want not skill to save.  
 With hopes in tenderness concealed,  
 Unarmed he followed to the field;  
 Him will I seek: the insurgent Powers  
 Are now besieging Barnard's Towers,—  
 "Grant that the Moon which shines this  
     night

May guide them in a prudent flight!"

But quick the turns of chance and  
     change,

And knowledge has a narrow range;  
 Whence idle fears, and needless pain,  
 And wishes blind, and efforts vain.—

The Moon may shine, but cannot be  
 Their guide in flight—already she  
 Hath witnessed their captivity.  
 She saw the desperate assault  
 Upon that hostile castle made;—  
 But dark and dismal is the vault  
 Where Norton and his sons are laid!  
 Disastrous issue!—he had said  
 "This night yon faithless Towers must  
     yield,

Or we for ever quit the field.

—Neville is utterly dismayed,  
 For promise fails of Howard's aid;  
 And Dacre to our call replies  
 That *he* is unprepared to rise.  
 My heart is sick;—this weary pause  
 Must needs be fatal to our cause.  
 The breach is open—on the wall,  
 This night, the Banner shall be planted!"  
 —'Twas done: his Sons were with him—  
     all;

They belt him round with hearts undaunted  
 And others follow;—Sire and Son  
 Leap down into the court;—" 'Tis won"—  
 They shout aloud—but Heaven decreed  
 That with their joyful shout should close  
 The triumph of a desperate deed  
 Which struck with terror friends and foes!  
 The friend shrinks back—the foe recoils  
 From Norton and his filial band;  
 But they, now caught within the toils,  
 Against a thousand cannot stand;—  
 The foe from numbers courage drew,  
 And overpowered that gallant few.  
 "A rescue for the Standard!" cried  
 The Father from within the walls;  
 But, see, the sacred Standard falls!—  
 Confusion through the Camp spread wide:  
 Some fled; and some their fears detained:  
 But ere the Moon had sunk to rest  
 In her pale chambers of the west,  
 Of that rash levy nought remained.

#### CANTO FIFTH

HIGH on a point of rugged ground  
 Among the wastes of Rylstone Fell  
 Above the loftiest ridge or mound  
 Where foresters or shepherds dwell,  
 An edifice of warlike frame  
 Stands single—Norton Tower its name—<sup>1</sup>  
 It fronts all quarters, and looks round  
 O'er path and road, and plain and dell,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Dark moor, and gleam of pool and stream,  
Upon a prospect without bound.

The summit of this bold ascent—  
Though bleak and bare, and seldom free  
As Pendle-hill or Pennygent  
From wind, or frost, or vapours wet—  
Had often heard the sound of glee  
When there the youthful Nortons met,  
To practise games and archery:  
How proud and happy they! the crowd  
Of Lookers-on how pleased and proud!  
And from the scorching noon-tide sun,  
From showers, or when the prize was won,  
They to the Tower withdrew, and there  
Would mirth run round, with generous  
fare;

And the stern old Lord of Rylstone-hall  
Was happiest, proudest, of them all!

But now, his Child, with anguish pale,  
Upon the height walks to and fro;  
'Tis well that she hath heard the tale,  
Received the bitterness of woe:  
For she *had* hoped, had hoped and feared,  
Such rights did feeble nature claim;  
And oft her steps had hither steered,  
Though not unconscious of self-blame;  
For she her brother's charge revered,  
His farewell words; and by the same,  
Yea by her brother's very name,  
Had, in her solitude, been cheered.

Beside the lonely watch-tower stood  
That grey-haired Man of gentle blood,  
Who with her Father had grown old  
In friendship; rival hunters they,  
And fellow warriors in their day;  
To Rylstone he the tidings brought;  
Then on this height the Maid had sought,  
And, gently as he could, had told  
The end of that dire Tragedy,  
Which it had been his lot to see.

To him the Lady turned; "You said  
That Francis lives, *he* is not dead?"  
"Your noble brother hath been spared;  
To take his life they have not dared;  
On him and on his high endeavour  
The light of praise shall shine for ever!  
Nor did he (such Heaven's will) in vain  
His solitary course maintain;  
Not vainly struggled in the might  
Of duty, seeing with clear sight;  
He was their comfort to the last,  
Their joy till every pang was past.

I witnessed when to York they came—  
What, Lady, if their feet were tied;

They might deserve a good Man's blame;  
But marks of infamy and shame—  
These were their triumph, these their pride;  
Nor wanted 'mid the pressing crowd  
Deep feeling, that found utterance loud,  
'Lo, Francis comes,' there were who cried,  
'A Prisoner once, but now set free!  
'Tis well, for he the worst defied  
Through force of natural piety;  
He rose not in this quarrel; he,  
For concord's sake and England's good,  
Suit to his Brothers often made  
With tears, and of his Father prayed—  
And when he had in vain withstood  
Their purpose—then did he divide,  
He parted from them; but at their side  
Now walks in unanimity.

Then peace to cruelty and scorn,  
While to the prison they are borne,  
Peace, peace to all indignity!

And so in Prison were they laid—  
Oh hear me, hear me, gentle Maid,  
For I am come with power to bless,  
By scattering gleams, through your distress,  
Of a redeeming happiness.

Me did a reverent pity move  
And privilege of ancient love;  
And, in your service, making bold,  
Entrance I gained to that stronghold.

Your Father gave me cordial greeting;  
But to his purposes, that burned  
Within him, instantly returned:  
He was commanding and entreating,  
And said—"We need not stop, my Son!  
Thoughts press, and time is hurrying on"—  
And so to Francis he renewed  
His words, more calmly thus pursued.

'Might this our enterprise have sped,  
Change wide and deep the Land had seen,  
A renovation from the dead,  
A spring-tide of immortal green:  
The darksome altars would have blazed  
Like stars when clouds are rolled away;  
Salvation to all eyes that gazed,  
Once more the Rood had been upraised  
To spread its arms, and stand for aye.  
Then, then—had I survived to see  
New life in Bolton Priory;  
The voice restored, the eye of Truth  
Re-opened that inspired my youth;  
To see her in her pomp arrayed—  
This Banner (for such vow I made)  
Should on the consecrated breast  
Of that same Temple have found rest:



I would myself have hung it high,  
Fit offering of glad victory !

A shadow of such thought remains  
To cheer this sad and pensive time ;  
A solemn fancy yet sustains  
One feeble Being—bids me climb  
Even to the last—one effort more  
To attest my Faith, if not restore.

Hear then, ' said he, ' while I impart,  
My Son, the last wish of my heart.  
The Banner strive thou to regain ;  
And, if the endeavour prove not vain,  
Bear it—to whom if not to thee  
Shall I this lonely thought consign ?—  
Bear it to Bolton Priory,  
And lay it on Saint Mary's shrine ;  
To wither in the sun and breeze  
'Mid those decaying sanctities.  
There let at least the gift be laid,  
The testimony there displayed ;  
Bold proof that with no selfish aim,  
But for lost Faith and Christ's dear name,  
I helmeted a brow though white,  
And took a place in all men's sight ;  
Yea offered up this noble Brood,  
This fair unrivalled Brotherhood,  
And turned away from thee, my Son !  
And left—but be the rest unsaid,  
The name untouched, the tear unshed ;—  
My wish is known, and I have done :  
Now promise, grant this one request,  
This dying prayer, and be thou blest ! '

Then Francis answered—' Trust thy Son,  
For, with God's will, it shall be done ! '—

The pledge obtained, the solemn word  
Thus scarcely given, a noise was heard,  
And Officers appeared in state  
To lead the prisoners to their fate.  
They rose, oh ! wherefore should I fear  
To tell, or, Lady, you to hear ?  
They rose—embraces none were given—  
They stood like trees when earth and heaven  
Are calm ; they knew each other's worth,  
And reverently the Band went forth.  
They met, when they had reached the door,  
One with profane and harsh intent  
Placed there—that he might go before  
And, with that rueful Banner borne  
Aloft in sign of taunting scorn,  
Conduct them to their punishment :  
So cruel Sussex, unrestrained  
By human feeling, had ordained.  
The unhappy Banner Francis saw,  
And, with a look of calm command

Inspiring universal awe,  
He took it from the soldier's hand ;  
And all the people that stood round  
Confirmed the deed in peace profound.  
—High transport did the Father shed  
Upon his Son—and they were led,  
Led on, and yielded up their breath ;  
Together died, a happy death !—  
But Francis, soon as he had braved  
That insult, and the Banner saved,  
Athwart the unresisting tide  
Of the spectators occupied  
In admiration or dismay,  
Bore instantly his Charge away."

These things, which thus had in the sight  
And hearing passed of Him who stood  
With Emily, on the Watch-tower height,  
In Rylstone's woeful neighbourhood,  
He told ; and oftentimes with voice  
Of power to comfort or rejoice ;  
For deepest sorrows that aspire,  
Go high, no transport ever higher.  
" Yes—God is rich in mercy," said  
The old Man to the silent Maid,  
" Yet, Lady ! shines, through this black  
night,

One star of aspect heavenly bright ;  
Your Brother lives—he lives—is come  
Perhaps already to his home ;  
Then let us leave this dreary place."  
She yielded, and with gentle pace,  
Though without one uplifted look,  
To Rylstone-hall her way she took.

## CANTO SIXTH

WHY comes not Francis ?—From the dole-  
ful City

He fled,—and, in his flight, could hear  
The death-sounds of the Minster-bell :  
That sullen stroke pronounced farewell  
To Marmaduke, cut off from pity !  
To Ambrose that ! and then a knell  
For him, the sweet half-opened Flower !  
For all—all dying in one hour !  
—Why comes not Francis ? Thoughts of  
love

Should bear him to his Sister dear  
With the fleet motion of a dove ;  
Yea, like a heavenly messenger  
Of speediest wing, should he appear.  
Why comes he not ?—for westward fast  
Along the plain of York he past ;

Reckless of what impels or leads,  
 Unchecked he hurries on ;—nor heeds  
 The sorrow, through the Villages,  
 Spread by triumphant cruelties  
 Of vengeful military force,  
 And punishment without remorse.  
 He marked not, heard not, as he fled  
 All but the suffering heart was dead  
 For him abandoned to blank awe,  
 To vacancy, and horror strong :  
 And the first object which he saw,  
 With conscious sight, as he swept along—  
 It was the Banner in his hand !  
 He felt—and made a sudden stand.

He looked about like one betrayed :  
 What hath he done? what promise made?  
 Oh weak, weak moment ! to what end  
 Can such a vain oblation tend,  
 And he the Bearer ?—Can he go  
 Carrying this instrument of woe,  
 And find, find anywhere, a right  
 To excuse him in his Country's sight ?  
 No ; will not all men deem the change  
 A downward course, perverse and strange?  
 Here is it ;—but how? when? must she,  
 The unoffending Emily,  
 Again this piteous object see?

Such conflict long did he maintain,  
 Nor liberty nor rest could gain :  
 His own life into danger brought  
 By this sad burden—even that thought,  
 Exciting self-suspicion strong  
 Swayed the brave man to his wrong.  
 And how—unless it were the sense  
 Of all-disposing Providence,  
 Its will unquestionably shown—  
 How has the Banner clung so fast  
 To a palsied, and unconscious hand ;  
 Clung to the hand to which it passed  
 Without impediment? And why,  
 But that Heaven's purpose might be known,  
 Doth now no hindrance meet his eye,  
 No intervention, to withstand  
 Fulfilment of a Father's prayer  
 Breathed to a Son forgiven, and blest  
 When all resentments were at rest,  
 And life in death laid the heart bare?—  
 Then, like a spectre sweeping by,  
 Rushed through his mind the prophecy  
 Of utter desolation made  
 To Emily in the yew-tree shade :  
 He sighed, submitting will and power  
 To the stern embrace of that grasping hour.  
 " No choice is left, the deed is mine—

Dead are they, dead !—and I will go,  
 And, for their sakes, come weal or woe,  
 Will lay the Relic on the shrine."

So forward with a steady will  
 He went, and traversed plain and hill ;  
 And up the vale of Wharf his way  
 Pursued ;—and, at the dawn of day,  
 Attained a summit whence his eyes  
 Could see the Tower of Bolton rise.  
 There Francis for a moment's space  
 Made halt—but hark ! a noise behind  
 Of horsemen at an eager pace !  
 He heard, and with misgiving mind.  
 —'Tis Sir George Bowes who leads the  
 Band :

They come, by cruel Sussex sent ;  
 Who, when the Nortons from the hand  
 Of death had drunk their punishment,  
 Bethought him, angry and ashamed,  
 How Francis, with the Banner claimed  
 As his own charge, had disappeared,  
 By all the standers-by revered.  
 His whole bold carriage (which had quelled  
 Thus far the Opposer, and repelled  
 All censure, enterprise so bright  
 That even bad men had vainly striven  
 Against that overcoming light)  
 Was then reviewed, and prompt word given,  
 That to what place soever fled  
 He should be seized, alive or dead.

The troop of horse have gained the height  
 Where Francis stood in open sight.  
 They hem him round—" Behold the proof,"  
 They cried, " the Ensign in his hand !"  
*He* did not arm, he walked aloof !  
 For why?—to save his Father's land ;—  
 Worst Traitor of them all is he,  
 A Traitor dark and cowardly !"

" I am no Traitor," Francis said,  
 " Though this unhappy freight I bear ;  
 And must not part with. But beware ;—  
 Err not by hasty zeal misled,  
 Nor do a suffering Spirit wrong,  
 Whose self-reproaches are too strong !"  
 At this he from the beaten road  
 Retreated towards a brake of thorn,  
 That like a place of vantage showed ;  
 And there stood bravely, though forlorn.  
 In self-defence with warlike brow  
 He stood,—nor weaponless was now ;  
 He from a Soldier's hand had snatched  
 A spear,—and, so protected, watched  
 The Assailants, turning round and round ;  
 But from behind with treacherous wound

A Spearman brought him to the ground,  
The guardian lance, as Francis fell,  
Dropped from him; but his other hand  
The Banner clenched; till, from out the  
Band,

One, the most eager for the prize,  
Rushed in; and—while, O grief to tell!  
A glimmering sense still left, with eyes  
Unclosed the noble Francis lay—  
Seized it, as hunters seize their prey;  
But not before the warm life-blood  
Had tinged more deeply, as it flowed,  
The wounds the brodered Banner showed,  
Thy fatal work, O Maiden, innocent as  
good!

Proudly the Horsemen bore away  
The Standard; and where Francis lay  
There was he left alone, unwept,  
And for two days unnoticed slept.  
For at that time bewildering fear  
Possessed the country, far and near;  
But, on the third day, passing by  
One of the Norton Tenantry  
Espied the uncovered Corse; the Man  
Shrunk as he recognised the face,  
And to the nearest homesteads ran  
And called the people to the place.  
—How desolate is Rylstone-hall!  
This was the instant thought of all;  
And if the lonely Lady there  
Should be; to her they cannot bear  
This weight of anguish and despair.  
So, when upon sad thoughts had prest  
Thoughts sadder still, they deemed it best  
That, if the Priest should yield assent  
And no one hinder their intent,  
Then, they, for Christian pity's sake,  
In holy ground a grave would make;  
And straightway buried he should be  
In the Churchyard of the Priory.

Apart, some little space, was made  
The grave where Francis must be laid.  
In no confusion or neglect  
This did they,—but in pure respect  
That he was born of gentle blood;  
And that there was no neighbourhood  
Of kindred for him in that ground:  
So to the Churchyard they are bound,  
Bearing the body on a bier;  
And psalms they sing—a holy sound  
That hill and vale with sadness hear.

But Emily hath raised her head,  
And is again disquieted;  
She must behold!—so many gone,

Where is the solitary One?  
And forth from Rylstone-hall stepped she,—  
To seek her Brother forth she went,  
And tremblingly her course she bent  
Toward Bolton's ruined Priory.  
She comes, and in the vale hath heard  
The funeral dirge;—she sees the knot  
Of people, sees them in one spot—  
And darting like a wounded bird  
She reached the grave, and with her breast  
Upon the ground received the rest,—  
The consummation, the whole ruth  
And sorrow of this final truth!

#### CANTO SEVENTH

"Powers there are  
That touch each other to the quick—in modes  
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,  
No soul to dream of."

THOU Spirit, whose angelic hand  
Was to the harp a strong command,  
Called the submissive strings to wake  
In glory for this Maiden's sake,  
Say, Spirit! whither hath she fled  
To hide her poor afflicted head?  
What mighty forest in its gloom  
Enfolds her?—is a rifted tomb  
Within the wilderness her seat?  
Some island which the wild waves beat—  
Is that the Sufferer's last retreat?  
Or some aspiring rock, that shrouds  
Its perilous front in mists and clouds?  
High-climbing rock, low sunless dale,  
Sea, desert, what do these avail?  
Oh take her anguish and her fears  
Into a deep recess of years!

'Tis done;—despoil and desolation  
O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown; 1  
Pools, terraces, and walks are sown  
With weeds; the bowers are overthrown,  
Or have given way to slow mutation,  
While, in their ancient habitation  
The Norton name hath been unknown.  
The lordly Mansion of its pride  
Is stripped; the ravage hath spread wide  
Through park and field, a perishing  
That mocks the gladness of the Spring!  
And, with this silent gloom agreeing,  
Appears a joyless human Being,  
Of aspect such as if the waste  
Were under her dominion placed.  
Upon a primrose bank, her throne

1 See Note.

Of quietness, she sits alone;  
 Among the ruins of a wood,  
 Erewhile a covert bright and green,  
 And where full many a brave tree stood,  
 That used to spread its boughs, and ring  
 With the sweet bird's carolling.  
 Behold her, like a virgin Queen,  
 Neglecting in imperial state  
 These outward images of fate,  
 And carrying inward a serene  
 And perfect sway, through many a thought  
 Of chance and change, that hath been  
 brought

To the subjection of a holy,  
 Though stern and rigorous, melancholy!  
 The like authority, with grace  
 Of awfulness, is in her face,—  
 There hath she fixed it; yet it seems  
 To o'ershadow by no native right  
 That face, which cannot lose the gleams,  
 Lose utterly the tender gleams,  
 Of gentleness and meek delight,  
 And loving-kindness ever bright:  
 Such is her sovereign mien:—her dress  
 (A vest with woollen cincture tied,  
 A hood of mountain-wool undyed)  
 Is homely,—fashioned to express  
 A wandering Pilgrim's humbleness.

And she *hath* wandered, long and far,  
 Beneath the light of sun and star;  
 Hath roamed in trouble and in grief,  
 Driven forward like a withered leaf,  
 Yea like a ship at random blown  
 To distant places and unknown.  
 But now she dares to seek a haven  
 Among her native wilds of Craven;  
 Hath seen again her Father's roof,  
 And put her fortitude to proof;  
 The mighty sorrow hath been borne,  
 And she is thoroughly forlorn:  
 Her soul doth in itself stand fast,  
 Sustained by memory of the past  
 And strength of Reason; held above  
 The infirmities of mortal love;  
 Undaunted, lofty, calm, and stable,  
 And awfully impenetrable.

And so—beneath a mouldered tree,  
 A self-surviving leafless oak  
 By unregarded age from stroke  
 Of ravage saved—sate Emily.  
 There did she rest, with head reclined,  
 Herself most like a stately flower,  
 (Such have I seen) whom chance of birth  
 Hath separated from its kind,

To live and die in a shady bower,  
 Single on the gladsome earth.

When, with a noise like distant thunder,  
 A troop of deer came sweeping by;  
 And, suddenly, behold a wonder!  
 For One, among those rushing deer,  
 A single One, in mid career  
 Hath stopped, and fixed her large full eye  
 Upon the Lady Emily;  
 A Doe most beautiful, clear-white,  
 A radiant creature, silver-bright!

Thus checked, a little while it stayed;  
 A little thoughtful pause it made;  
 And then advanced with stealth-like pace,  
 Drew softly near her, and more near—  
 Looked round—but saw no cause for fear;  
 So to her feet the Creature came,  
 And laid its head upon her knee,  
 And looked into the Lady's face,  
 A look of pure benignity,  
 And fond unclouded memory.  
 It is, thought Emily, the same,  
 The very Doe of other years!—  
 The pleading look the Lady viewed,  
 And, by her gushing thoughts subdued,  
 She melted into tears—  
 A flood of tears, that flowed apace,  
 Upon the happy Creature's face.

Oh, moment ever blest! O Pair  
 Beloved of Heaven, Heaven's chosen care,  
 This was for you a precious greeting;  
 And may it prove a fruitful meeting!  
 Joined are they, and the sylvan Doe  
 Can she depart? can she forego  
 The Lady, once her playful peer,  
 And now her sainted Mistress dear?  
 And will not Emily receive  
 This lovely chronicler of things  
 Long past, delights and sorrowings?  
 Lone Sufferer! will not she believe  
 The promise in that speaking face;  
 And welcome, as a gift of grace,  
 The saddest thought the Creature brings?

That day, the first of a re-union  
 Which was to teem with high communion,  
 That day of balmy April weather,  
 They tarried in the wood together.  
 And when, ere fall of evening dew,  
 She from her sylvan haunt withdrew,  
 The White Doe tracked with faithful pace  
 The Lady to her dwelling-place;  
 That nook where, on paternal ground,  
 A habitation she had found,  
 The Master of whose humble board

Once owned her Father for his Lord ;  
A hut, by tufted trees defended,  
Where Rylstone brook with Wharf is  
blended.

When Emily by morning light  
Went forth, the Doe stood there in sight.  
She shrunk :—with one frail shock of pain  
Received and followed by a prayer,  
She saw the Creature once again ;  
Shun will she not, she feels, will bear ;—  
But, wheresoever she looked round,  
All now was trouble-haunted ground ;  
And therefore now she deems it good  
Once more this restless neighbourhood  
To leave.—Unwooded, yet unforbidden,  
The White Doe followed up the vale,  
Up to another cottage, hidden  
In the deep fork of Amerdale ;<sup>1</sup>  
And there may Emily restore  
Herself, in spots unseen before.  
—Why tell of mossy rock, or tree,  
By lurking Dernbrook's pathless side,  
Haunts of a strengthening amity  
That calmed her, cheered, and fortified ?  
For she hath ventured now to read  
Of time, and place, and thought, and  
deed—

Endless history that lies  
In her silent Follower's eyes ;  
Who with a power like human reason  
Discerns the favourable season,  
Skilled to approach or to retire,—  
From looks conceiving her desire ;  
From look, deportment, voice, or mien,  
That vary to the heart within.  
If she too passionately wreathed  
Her arms, or over-deeply breathed,  
Walked quick or slowly, every mood  
In its degree was understood ;  
Then well may their accord be true,  
And kindest intercourse ensue.  
—Oh ! surely 'twas a gentle rousing  
When she by sudden glimpse espied  
The White Doe on the mountain browsing,  
Or in the meadow wandered wide !  
How pleased, when down the Straggler sank  
Beside her, on some sunny bank !  
How soothed, when in thick bower enclosed,  
They, like a nested pair, reposed !  
Fair Vision ! when it crossed the Maid  
Within some rocky cavern laid,  
The dark cave's portal gliding by,  
White as whitest cloud on high

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Floating through the azure sky.  
—What now is left for pain or fear ?  
That Presence, dearer and more dear,  
While they, side by side, were straying,  
And the shepherd's pipe was playing,  
Did now a very gladness yield  
At morning to the dewy field,  
And with a deeper peace endued  
The hour of moonlight solitude.

With her Companion, in such frame  
Of mind, to Rylstone back she came ;  
And, ranging through the wasted groves,  
Received the memory of old loves,  
Undisturbed and undistrest,  
Into a soul which now was blest  
With a soft spring-day of holy,  
Mild, and grateful, melancholy :  
Not sunless gloom or unenlightened,  
But by tender fancies brightened.

When the bells of Rylstone played  
Their sabbath music—"God us syde !"  
That was the sound they seemed to speak ;  
Inscriptive legend which I ween  
May on those holy bells be seen,  
That legend and her Grandsire's name ;  
And oftentimes the Lady meek  
Had in her childhood read the same ;  
Words which she slighted at that day ;  
But now, when such sad change was  
wrought,

And of that lonely name she thought—  
The bells of Rylstone seemed to say,  
While she sate listening in the shade,  
With vocal music, "God us syde !"  
And all the hills were glad to bear  
Their part in this effectual prayer.

Nor lacked she Reason's firmest power ;  
But with the White Doe at her side  
Up would she climb to Norton Tower,  
And thence look round her far and wide,  
Her fate there measuring ;—all is stilled,—  
The weak One hath subdued her heart ;  
Behold the prophecy fulfilled,  
Fulfilled, and she sustains her part !  
But here her Brother's words have failed ;  
Here hath a milder doom prevailed ;  
That she, of him and all bereft,  
Hath yet this faithful Partner left ;  
This one Associate, that disproves  
His words, remains for her, and loves.  
If tears are shed, they do not fall  
For loss of him—for one, or all ;  
Yet, sometimes, sometimes doth she weep  
Moved gently in her soul's soft sleep ;

A few tears down her cheek descend  
For this her last and living Friend.

Bless, tender Hearts, their mutual lot,  
And bless for both this savage spot ;  
Which Emily doth sacred hold  
For reasons dear and manifold—  
Here hath she, here before her sight,  
Close to the summit of this height,  
The grassy rock-encircled Pound<sup>1</sup>  
In which the Creature first was found.  
So beautiful the timid Thrall  
(A spotless Youngling white as foam)  
Her youngest Brother brought it home ;  
The youngest, then a lusty boy,  
Bore it, or led, to Rylstone-hall  
With heart brimful of pride and joy !

But most to Bolton's sacred Pile,  
On favouring nights, she loved to go ;  
There ranged through cloister, court, and  
aisle,

Attended by the soft-paced Doe ;  
Nor feared she in the still moonshine  
To look upon Saint Mary's shrine ;  
Nor on the lonely turf that showed  
Where Francis slept in his last abode.  
For that she came ; there oft she sate  
Forlorn, but not disconsolate :  
And, when she from the abyss returned  
Of thought, she neither shrunk nor  
mourned ;

Was happy that she lived to greet  
Her mute Companion as it lay  
In love and pity at her feet ;  
How happy in its turn to meet  
The recognition ! the mild glance  
Beamed from that gracious countenance ;  
Communication, like the ray  
Of a new morning, to the nature  
And prospects of the inferior Creature !

A mortal Song we sing, by dower  
Encouraged of celestial power ;  
Power which the viewless Spirit shed  
By whom we were first visited ;  
Whose voice we heard, whose hand and  
wings

Swept like a breeze the conscious strings,  
When, left in solitude, erewhile  
We stood before this ruined Pile,  
And, quitting unsubstantial dreams,  
Sang in this Presence kindred themes ;  
Distress and desolation spread  
Through human hearts, and pleasure dead,—  
Dead—but to live again on earth,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

A second and yet nobler birth ;  
Dire overthrow, and yet how high  
The re-ascend in sanctity !  
From fair to fairer ; day by day  
A more divine and loftier way !  
Even such this blessed Pilgrim trod,  
By sorrow lifted towards her God ;  
Uplifted to the purest sky  
Of undisturbed mortality.  
Her own thoughts loved she ; and could  
bend

A dear look to her lowly Friend ;  
There stopped ; her thirst was satisfied  
With what this innocent spring supplied :  
Her sanction inwardly she bore,  
And stood apart from human cares :  
But to the world returned no more,  
Although with no unwilling mind  
Help did she give at need, and joined  
The Wharfedale peasants in their prayers.  
At length, thus faintly, faintly tied  
To earth, she was set free, and died.  
Thy soul, exalted Emily,  
Maid of the blasted family,  
Rose to the God from whom it came !  
—In Rylstone Church her mortal frame  
Was buried by her Mother's side.

Most glorious sunset ! and a ray  
Survives—the twilight of this day—  
In that fair Creature whom the fields  
Support, and whom the forest shields ;  
Who, having filled a holy place,  
Partakes, in her degree, Heaven's grace ;  
And bears a memory and a mind  
Raised far above the law of kind ;  
Haunting the spots with lonely cheer  
Which her dear Mistress once held dear :  
Loves most what Emily loved most—  
The enclosure of this churchyard ground ;  
Here wanders like a gliding ghost,  
And every sabbath here is found ;  
Comes with the people when the bells  
Are heard among the moorland dells,  
Finds entrance through yon arch, where  
way

Lies open on the sabbath-day ;  
Here walks amid the mournful waste  
Of prostrate altars, shrines defaced,  
And floors encumbered with rich show  
Of fret-work imagery laid low ;  
Paces softly, or makes halt,  
By fractured cell, or tomb, or vault ;  
By plate of monumental brass  
Dim-gleaming among weeds and grass,

And sculptured Forms of Warriors brave :  
 But chiefly by that single grave,  
 That one sequestered hillock green,  
 The pensive visitant is seen.  
 There doth the gentle Creature lie  
 With those adversities unmoved ;  
 Calm spectacle, by earth and sky  
 In their benignity approved !  
 And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,  
 Subdued by outrage and decay,  
 Looks down upon her with a smile,  
 A gracious smile, that seems to say—  
 "Thou, thou art not a Child of Time,  
 But Daughter of the Eternal Prime !"

1807.

THE FORCE OF PRAYER;<sup>1</sup>

OR,

## THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY

## A TRADITION

An Appendage to the "White Doe." My friend, Mr. Rogers, has also written on the subject. The story is preserved in Dr. Whitaker's *History of Craven*—a topographical writer of first-rate merit in all that concerns the past; but such was his aversion from the modern spirit, as shown in the spread of manufactories in those districts of which he treats, that his readers are left entirely ignorant both of the progress of these arts and their real bearing upon the comfort, virtues, and happiness of the inhabitants. While wandering on foot through the fertile valleys and over the moorlands of the Apennine that divides Yorkshire from Lancashire, I used to be delighted with observing the number of substantial cottages that had sprung up on every side, each having its little plot of fertile ground won from the surrounding waste. A bright and warm fire, if needed, was always to be found in these dwellings. The father was at his loom; the children looked healthy and happy. Is it not to be feared that the increase of mechanic power has done away with many of these blessings, and substituted many evils? Alas! if these evils grow, how are they to be checked, and where is the remedy to be found? Political economy will not supply it; that is certain, we must look to something deeper, purer, and higher.

"What is good for a bootless bene?"  
 With these dark words begins my Tale;  
 And their meaning is, whence can comfort  
 spring  
 When Prayer is of no avail?

<sup>1</sup> See the "White Doe of Rylstone."

"What is good for a bootless bene?"  
 The Falconer to the Lady said;  
 And she made answer "ENDLESS SORROW!"  
 For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer's words,  
 And from the look of the Falconer's eye;  
 And from the love which was in her soul  
 For her youthful Romilly.

—Young Romilly through Barden woods  
 Is ranging high and low;  
 And holds a greyhound in a leash,  
 To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,  
 How tempting to bestride!  
 For lordly Wharf is there pent in  
 With rocks on either side.

This striding-place is called THE STRID,  
 A name which it took of yore:  
 A thousand years hath it borne that name,  
 And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,  
 And what may now forbid  
 That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,  
 Shall bound across THE STRID?

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he  
 That the river was strong, and the rocks  
 were steep?—

But the greyhound in the leash hung back,  
 And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,  
 And strangled by a merciless force;  
 For never more was young Romilly seen  
 Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,  
 And long, unspeaking, sorrow:  
 Wharf shall be to pitying hearts  
 A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a lover the Lady wept,  
 A solace she might borrow  
 From death, and from the passion of death;—  
 Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day  
 Which was to be to-morrow:  
 Her hope was a further-looking hope,  
 And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,  
And proudly did its branches wave;  
And the root of this delightful tree  
Was in her husband's grave!

Long, long in darkness did she sit,  
And her first words were, "Let there be  
In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,  
A stately Priory!"

The stately Priory was reared;  
And Wharf, as he moved along,  
To matins joined a mournful voice,  
Nor failed at evensong.

And the Lady prayed in heaviness  
That looked not for relief!  
But slowly did her succour come,  
And a patience to her grief.

Oh! there is never sorrow of heart  
That shall lack a timely end,  
If but to God we turn, and ask  
Of Him to be our friend! 1807.

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR  
WAS ENGAGED IN WRITING A  
TRACT OCCASIONED BY THE  
CONVENTION OF CINTRA

Not 'mid the world's vain objects that  
enslave  
The free-born Soul—that World whose  
vaunted skill

In selfish interest perverts the will,  
Whose factions lead astray the wise and  
brave—

Not there; but in dark wood and rocky  
cave,

And hollow vale which foaming torrents fill  
With omnipresent murmur as they rave  
Down their steep beds, that never shall be  
still:

Here, mighty Nature! in this school sub-  
lime

I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering  
Spain;

For her consult the auguries of time,  
And through the human heart explore my  
way;

And look and listen—gathering, whence I  
may,

Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can  
restrain. 1808.

COMPOSED AT THE SAME TIME  
AND ON THE SAME OCCASION

I DROPPED my pen; and listened to the  
Wind  
That sang of trees upturned and vessels  
tost—

A midnight harmony; and wholly lost  
To the general sense of men by chains con-  
fined

Of business, care, or pleasure; or resigned  
To timely sleep. Thought I, the impas-  
sioned strain,

Which, without aid of numbers, I sustain,  
Like acceptance from the World will find.  
Yet some with apprehensive ear shall drink  
A dirge devoutly breathed o'er sorrows  
past;

And to the attendant promise will give  
heed—

The prophecy,—like that of this wild blast,  
Which, while it makes the heart with sad-  
ness shrink,

Tells also of bright calms that shall suc-  
ceed. 1808.

GEORGE AND SARAH GREEN

Who weeps for strangers? Many wept  
For George and Sarah Green;  
Wept for that pair's unhappy fate,  
Whose grave may here be seen.

By night, upon these stormy fells,  
Did wife and husband roam;  
Six little ones at home had left,  
And could not find that home.

For any dwelling-place of man  
As vainly did they seek.  
He perish'd; and a voice was heard—  
The widow's lonely shriek.

Not many steps, and she was left  
A body without life—  
A few short steps were the chain that bound  
The husband to the wife.

Now do those sternly-featured hills  
Look gently on this grave;  
And quiet now are the depths of air,  
As a sea without a wave.



But deeper lies the heart of peace  
In quiet more profound ;  
The heart of quietness is here  
Within this churchyard bound.

And from all agony of mind  
It keeps them safe, and far  
From fear and grief, and from all need  
Of sun or guiding star.

O darkness of the grave ! how deep,  
After that living night—  
That last and dreary living one  
Of sorrow and affright ?

O sacred marriage-bed of death,  
That keeps them side by side  
In bond of peace, in bond of love,  
That may not be untied !

1808.

## HOFFER

OF mortal parents is the Hero born  
By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led ?  
Or is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead  
Returned to animate an age forlorn ?  
He comes like Phœbus through the gates  
of morn

When dreary darkness is discomfited,  
Yet mark his modest state ! upon his  
head,  
That simple crest, a heron's plume, is  
worn.

O Liberty ! they stagger at the shock  
From van to rear—and with one mind  
would flee,

But half their host is buried :—rock on  
rock

Descends :—beneath this godlike Warrior,  
see !

Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to bemock  
The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

1809.

“ADVANCE—COME FORTH FROM  
THY TYROLEAN GROUND”

ADVANCE—come forth from thy Tyrolean  
ground,

Dear Liberty ! stern Nymph of soul  
untamed ;

Sweet Nymph, O rightly of the mountains  
named !

Through the long chain of Alps from mound  
to mound

And o'er the eternal snows, like Echo,  
bound ;

Like Echo, when the hunter train at dawn  
Have roused her from her sleep : and  
forest-lawn,

Cliffs, woods and caves, her viewless steps  
resound

And babble of her pastime !—On, dread  
Power !

With such invisible motion speed thy flight,  
Through hanging clouds, from craggy height  
to height,

Through the green vales and through the  
herdsman's bower—

That all the Alps may gladden in thy might,  
Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

1809.

## FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE

THE Land we from our fathers had in  
trust,

And to our children will transmit, or die :

This is our maxim, this our piety ;

And God and Nature say that it is just.

That which we *would* perform in arms—we  
must !

We read the dictate in the infant's eye ;

In the wife's smile ; and in the placid sky ;

And, at our feet, amid the silent dust

Of them that were before us.—Sing aloud  
Old songs, the precious music of the  
heart !

Give, herds and flocks, your voices to the  
wind !

While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,  
With weapons grasped in fearless hands,  
to assert

Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

1809.

“ALAS ! WHAT BOOTS THE LONG  
LABORIOUS QUEST”

ALAS ! what boots the long laborious  
quest

Of moral prudence, sought through good  
and ill ;

Or pains abstruse—to elevate the will,

And lead us on to that transcendent rest

Where every passion shall the sway attest

Of Reason, seated on her sovereign hill ;

What is it but a vain and curious skill,  
If sapient Germany must lie deprest,  
Beneath the brutal sword?—Her haughty  
Schools

Shall blush ; and may not we with sorrow  
say—

A few strong instincts and a few plain  
rules,

Among the herdsmen of the Alps, have  
wrought

More for mankind at this unhappy day  
Then all the pride of intellect and thought?

1809.

### "AND IS IT AMONG RUDE UNTUTORED DALES"

AND is it among rude untutored Dales,  
There, and there only, that the heart is  
true?

And, rising to repel or to subdue,  
Is it by rocks and woods that man prevails?  
Ah no! though Nature's dread protection  
fails,

There is a bulwark in the soul. This knew  
Iberian Burghers when the sword they drew  
In Zaragoza, naked to the gales  
Of fiercely-breathing war. The truth was  
felt

By Palafox, and many a brave compeer,  
Like him of noble birth and noble mind;  
By ladies, meek-eyed women without fear;  
And wanderers of the street, to whom is  
dealt

The bread which without industry they find.  
1809.

### "O'ER THE WIDE EARTH, ON MOUNTAIN AND ON PLAIN"

O'ER the wide earth, on mountain and on  
plain,

Dwells in the affections and the soul of man  
A Godhead, like the universal PAN;

But more exalted, with a brighter train:  
And shall his bounty be dispensed in vain,  
Showered equally on city and on field,  
And neither hope nor steadfast promise  
yield

In these usurping times of fear and pain?  
Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it  
Heaven!

We know the arduous strife, the eternal  
laws

To which the triumph of all good is given,  
High sacrifice, and labour without pause,  
Even to the death :—else wherefore should  
the eye

Of man converse with immortality?

1809.

### ON THE FINAL SUBMISSION OF THE TYROLESE

IT was a *moral* end for which they fought;  
Else how, when mighty Thrones were put  
to shame,

Could they, poor Shepherds, have preserved  
an aim,

A resolution, or enlivening thought?  
Nor hath that moral good been *vainly*  
sought;

For in their magnanimity and fame  
Powers have they left, an impulse, and a  
claim

Which neither can be overturned nor  
bought.

Sleep, Warriors, sleep! among your hills  
repose!

We know that ye, beneath the stern control  
Of awful prudence, keep the unvanquished  
soul:

And when, impatient of her guilt and woes,  
Europe breaks forth; then, Shepherds!  
shall ye rise

For perfect triumph o'er your Enemies.

1809.

### "HAIL, ZARAGOZA! IF WITH UNWET EYE"<sup>1</sup>

HAIL, Zaragoza! If with unwet eye  
We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,  
Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold;  
Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.  
These desolate remains are trophies high  
Of more than martial courage in the breast  
Of peaceful civic virtue: they attest  
Thy matchless worth to all posterity.

Blood flowed before thy sight without  
remorse;

Disease consumed thy vitals; War up-  
heaved

The ground beneath thee with volcanic  
force:

Dread trials! yet encountered and sustained  
Till not a wreck of help or hope remained,  
And law was from necessity received.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

1809.

"SAY, WHAT IS HONOUR?—'TIS  
THE FINEST SENSE"

SAY, what is Honour?—'Tis the finest  
sense

Of *justice* which the human mind can  
frame,

Intent each lurking frailty to disclaim,  
And guard the way of life from all offence  
Suffered or done. When lawless violence  
Invades a Realm, so pressed that in the  
scale

Of perilous war her weightiest armies fail,  
Honour is hopeful elevation,—whence  
Glory, and triumph. Yet with politic skill  
Endangered States may yield to terms  
unjust;

Stoop their proud heads, but not unto the  
dust—

A Foe's most favourite purpose to fulfil:  
Happy occasions oft by self-mistrust  
Are forfeited; but infamy doth kill.

1809.

"THE MARTIAL COURAGE OF A  
DAY IS VAIN"

THE martial courage of a day is vain,  
An empty noise of death the battle's roar,  
If vital hope be wanting to restore,  
Or fortitude be wanting to sustain,  
Armies or kingdoms. We have heard a  
strain

Of triumph, how the labouring Danube  
bore

A weight of hostile corses; drenched with  
gore

Were the wide fields, the hamlets heaped  
with slain.

Yet see (the mighty tumult overpast)  
Austria a daughter of her Throne hath  
sold!

And her Tyrolean Champion we behold  
Murdered, like one ashore by shipwreck  
cast,

Murdered without relief. Oh! blind as  
bold,

To think that such assurance can stand fast!

1809.

"BRAVE SCHILL! BY DEATH  
DELIVERED"

BRAVE Schill! by death delivered, take  
thy flight

From Prussia's timid region. Go, and rest  
With heroes, 'mid the islands of the Blest,  
Or in the fields of empyrean light.

A meteor wert thou crossing a dark night:  
Yet shall thy name, conspicuous and  
sublime,

Stand in the spacious firmament of time,  
Fixed as a star: such glory is thy right.  
Alas! it may not be: for earthly fame  
Is Fortune's frail dependant; yet there lives  
A Judge, who, as man claims by merit,  
gives;

To whose all-pondering mind a noble aim,  
Faithfully kept, is as a noble deed;  
In whose pure sight all virtue doth succeed.

1809.

"CALL NOT THE ROYAL SWEDE  
UNFORTUNATE"

CALL not the royal Swede unfortunate,  
Who never did to Fortune bend the knee;  
Who slighted fear; rejected steadfastly  
Temptation; and whose kingly name and  
state

Have "perished by his choice, and not his  
fate!"

Hence lives He, to his inner self endeared;  
And hence, wherever virtue is revered,  
He sits a more exalted Potentate,  
Throned in the hearts of men. Should  
Heaven ordain

That this great Servant of a righteous cause  
Must still have sad or vexing thoughts to  
endure,

Yet may a sympathising spirit pause,  
Admonished by these truths, and quench  
all pain

In thankful joy and gratulation pure.<sup>1</sup>

1809.

"LOOK NOW ON THAT ADVEN-  
TURER WHO HATH PAID"

LOOK now on that Adventurer who hath  
paid

His vows to Fortune; who, in cruel slight  
Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,  
Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was made  
By the blind Goddess,—ruthless, undis-  
mayed;

<sup>1</sup> See Note to "The King of Sweden," p. 180.

And so hath gained at length a prosperous  
height,  
Round which the elements of worldly might  
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are laid.  
O joyless power that stands by lawless force!  
Curses are *his* dire portion, scorn, and hate,  
Internal darkness and unquiet breath;  
And, if old judgments keep their sacred  
course,  
Him from that height shall Heaven pre-  
cipitate  
By violent and ignominious death.

1809.

"IS THERE A POWER THAT CAN  
SUSTAIN AND CHEER"

Is there a power that can sustain and cheer  
The captive chieftain, by a tyrant's doom,  
Forced to descend into his destined tomb—  
A dungeon dark! where he must waste the  
year,

And lie cut off from all his heart holds dear;  
What time his injured country is a stage  
Whereon deliberate Valour and the rage  
Of righteous Vengeance side by side appear,  
Filling from morn to night the heroic scene  
With deeds of hope and everlasting  
praise:—

Say can he think of this with mind serene  
And silent fetters? Yes, if visions bright  
Shine on his soul, reflected from the days  
When he himself was tried in open light.

1809.

"AH! WHERE IS PALAFOX? NOR  
TONGUE NOR PEN"

AH! where is Palafox? Nor tongue nor  
pen

Reports of him, his dwelling or his grave!  
Does yet the unheard-of vessel ride the wave?  
Or is she swallowed up, remote from ken  
Of pitying human nature? Once again  
Methinks that we shall hail thee, Champion  
brave,

Redeemed to baffle that imperial Slave,  
And through all Europe cheer desponding  
men

With new-born hope. Unbounded is the  
might

Of martyrdom, and fortitude, and right.  
Hark, how thy Country triumphs!—Smil-  
ingly

The Eternal looks upon her sword that  
gleams,  
Like his own lightning, over mountains  
high,  
On rampart, and the banks of all her  
streams.

1810.

"IN DUE OBSERVANCE OF AN  
ANCIENT RITE"

IN due observance of an ancient rite,  
The rude Biscayans, when their children lie  
Dead in the sinless time of infancy,  
Attire the peaceful corse in vestments white;  
And, in like sign of cloudless triumph  
bright,

They bind the unoffending creature's brows  
With happy garlands of the pure white  
rose:

Then do a festal company unite  
In choral song; and, while the uplifted  
cross

Of Jesus goes before, the child is borne  
Uncovered to his grave: 'tis closed,—her  
loss

The Mother *then* mourns, as she needs  
must mourn;

But soon, through Christian faith, is grief  
subdued;

And joy returns, to brighten fortitude.

1810.

FEELINGS OF A NOBLE BISCAYAN  
AT ONE OF THOSE FUNERALS

YET, yet, Biscayans! we must meet our  
Foes

With firmer soul, yet labour to regain  
Our ancient freedom; else 'twere worse  
than vain

To gather round the bier these festal shows,  
A garland fashioned of the pure white rose  
Becomes not one whose father is a slave:  
Oh, bear the infant covered to his grave!  
These venerable mountains now enclose  
A people sunk in apathy and fear.

If this endure, farewell, for us, all good!  
The awful light of heavenly innocence  
Will fail to illuminate the infant's bier;  
And guilt and shame, from which is no  
defence,

Descend on all that issues from our blood.

1810.

### ON A CELEBRATED EVENT IN ANCIENT HISTORY

A ROMAN Master stands on Grecian  
ground,  
And to the people at the Isthmian Games  
Assembled, He, by a herald's voice, pro-  
claims

THE LIBERTY OF GREECE :—the words  
rebound

Until all voices in one voice are drowned ;  
Glad acclamation by which air was rent !  
And birds, high-flying in the element,  
Dropped to the earth, astonished at the  
sound !

Yet were the thoughtful grieved ; and still  
that voice

Haunts, with sad echoes, musing Fancy's  
ear :

Ah ! that a *Conqueror's* words should be so  
dear :

Ah ! that a *boon* could shed such rapturous  
joys !

A gift of that which is not to be given  
By all the blended powers of Earth and  
Heaven. 1810.

### UPON THE SAME EVENT

WHEN, far and wide, swift as the beams  
of morn

The tidings past of servitude repealed,  
And of that joy which shook the Isthmian  
Field,

The rough Ætolians smiled with bitter  
scorn.

" 'Tis known," cried they, " that he, who  
would adorn

His envied temples with the Isthmian  
crown,

Must either win, through effort of his own,  
The prize, or be content to see it worn

By more deserving brows. — Yet so ye  
prop,

Sons of the brave who fought at Marathon,  
Your feeble spirits ! Greece her head hath  
bowed,

As if the wreath of liberty thereon  
Would fix itself as smoothly as a cloud,  
Which, at Jove's will, descends on Pelion's  
top." 1810.

### THE OAK OF GUERNICA

The ancient oak of Guernica, says Laborde in his account of Biscay, is a most venerable natural monument. Ferdinand and Isabella, in the year 1476, after hearing mass in the church of Santa Maria de la Antigua, repaired to this tree, under which they swore to the Biscayans to maintain their *fueros* (privileges). What other interest belongs to it in the minds of this people will appear from the following

#### SUPPOSED ADDRESS TO THE SAME

OAK of Guernica ! Tree of holier power  
Than that which in Dodona did enshrine  
(So faith too fondly deemed) a voice divine  
Heard from the depths of its ærial bower—  
How canst thou flourish at this blighting  
hour ?

What hope, what joy can sunshine bring to  
thee,

Or the soft breezes from the Atlantic sea,  
The dews of morn, or April's tender  
shower ?

Stroke merciful and welcome would that be  
Which should extend thy branches on the  
ground,

If never more within their shady round  
Those lofty-minded Lawgivers shall meet,  
Peasant and lord, in their appointed seat,  
Guardians of Biscay's ancient liberty.

1810.

### INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD

WE can endure that He should waste our  
lands,

Despoil our temples, and by sword and  
flame

Return us to the dust from which we came ;  
Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands :

And we can brook the thought that by his  
hands

Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,  
For his delight, a solemn wilderness.

Where all the brave lie dead. But, when  
of hands

Which he will break for us he dares to  
speak,

Of benefits, and of a future day  
When our enlightened minds shall bless his  
sway ;

*Then*, the strained heart of fortitude proves weak ;  
Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks declare  
That he has power to inflict what we lack strength to bear. 1810.

"AVAUNT ALL SPECIOUS  
PLIANCY OF MIND"

AVAUNT all specious pliancy of mind  
In men of low degree, all smooth pretence !  
I better like a blunt indifference,  
And self-respecting slowness, disinclined  
To win me at first sight : and be there joined  
Patience and temperance with this high reserve,  
Honour that knows the path and will not swerve ;  
Affections, which, if put to proof, are kind ;  
And piety towards God. Such men of old  
Were England's native growth ; and, throughout Spain  
(Thanks to high God) forests of such remain :  
Then for that Country let our hopes be bold ;  
For matched with these shall policy prove vain,  
Her arts, her strength, her iron, and her gold. 1810.

"O'ERWEENING STATESMEN  
HAVE FULL LONG RELIED"

O'ERWEENING Statesmen have full long relied  
On fleets and armies, and external wealth :  
But from *within* proceeds a Nation's health ;  
Which shall not fail, though poor men cleave with pride  
To the paternal floor ; or turn aside,  
In the thronged city, from the walks of gain,  
As being all unworthy to detain  
A Soul by contemplation sanctified.  
There are who cannot languish in this strife,  
Spaniards of every rank, by whom the good  
Of such high course was felt and understood ;  
Who to their Country's cause have bound a life  
Erewhile, by solemn consecration, given  
To labour and to prayer, to nature, and to heaven.<sup>1</sup> 1810.

<sup>1</sup> See Laborde's character of the Spanish people ; from him the sentiment of these last two lines is taken.

THE FRENCH AND THE SPANISH  
GUERRILLAS

HUNGER, and sultry heat, and nipping blast  
From bleak hill-top, and length of march  
by night  
Through heavy swamp, or over snow-clad height—  
These hardships ill-sustained, these dangers past,  
The roving Spanish Bands are reached at last,  
Charged, and dispersed like foam : but as a flight  
Of scattered quails by signs do reunite,  
So these,—and, heard of once again, are chased  
With combinations of long-practised art  
And newly-kindled hope ; but they are fled—  
Gone are they, viewless as the buried dead :  
Where now ?—Their sword is at the Foe-man's heart ;  
And thus from year to year his walk they thwart,  
And hang like dreams around his guilty bed. 1810.

EPITAPHS

1810.

TRANSLATED FROM CHIABRERA

Those from Chiabrera were chiefly translated when Mr. Coleridge was writing his "*Friend*," in which periodical my "*Essay on Epitaphs*," written about that time, was first published. For further notice of Chiabrera, in connection with his Epitaphs, see "*Musings at Aquapendente*."

I

WEEP not, beloved Friends ! nor let the air  
For me with sighs be troubled. Not from life  
Have I been taken ; this is genuine life  
And this alone—the life which now I live  
In peace eternal ; where desire and joy  
Together move in fellowship without end.—  
Francesco Ceni willed that, after death,  
His tombstone thus should speak for him.  
And surely  
Small cause there is for that fond wish of ours  
Long to continue in this world ; a world  
That keeps not faith, nor yet can point a hope  
To good, whereof itself is destitute.

## II

PERHAPS some needful service of the State  
 Drew TITUS from the depth of studious  
 bowers,  
 And doomed him to contend in faithless  
 courts,  
 Where gold determines between right and  
 wrong.  
 Yet did at length his loyalty of heart,  
 And his pure native genius, lead him back  
 To wait upon the bright and gracious Muses,  
 Whom he had early loved. And not in vain  
 Such course he held ! Bologna's learned  
 schools  
 Were gladdened by the Sage's voice, and  
 hung  
 With fondness on those sweet Nestorian  
 strains.  
 There pleasure crowned his days ; and all  
 his thoughts  
 A roseate fragrance breathed.<sup>1</sup>—O human  
 life,  
 That never art secure from dolorous change !  
 Behold a high injunction suddenly  
 To Arno's side hath brought him, and he  
 charmed  
 A Tuscan audience : but full soon was called  
 To the perpetual silence of the grave.  
 Mourn, Italy, the loss of him who stood  
 A Champion stedfast and invincible,  
 To quell the rage of literary War !

## III

O THOU who movest onward with a mind  
 Intent upon thy way, pause, though in haste !  
 'Twill be no fruitless moment. I was born  
 Within Savona's walls, of gentle blood.  
 On Tiber's banks my youth was dedicate  
 To sacred studies ; and the Roman Shepherd  
 Gave to my charge Urbino's numerous flock.  
 Well did I watch, much laboured, nor had  
 power  
 To escape from many and strange indignities ;  
 Was smitten by the great ones of the world,  
 But did not fall ; for Virtue braves all  
 shocks,  
 Upon herself resting immoveably.

<sup>1</sup> Ivi vivea giocondo ei suoi pensieri  
 Erano tutti rose.

The Translator had not skill to come nearer to  
 his original.

Me did a kindlier fortune then invite  
 To serve the glorious Henry, King of  
 France,  
 And in his hands I saw a high reward  
 Stretched out for my acceptance,—but  
 Death came.  
 Now, Reader, learn from this my fate, how  
 false,  
 How treacherous to her promise, is the  
 world ;  
 And trust in God—to whose eternal doom  
 Must bend the sceptred Potentates of earth.

## IV

THERE never breathed a man who, when  
 his life  
 Was closing, might not of that life relate  
 Toils long and hard.—The warrior will  
 report  
 Of wounds, and bright swords flashing in  
 the field,  
 And blast of trumpets. He who hath been  
 doomed  
 To bow his forehead in the courts of kings,  
 Will tell of fraud and never-ceasing hate,  
 Envy and heart-inquietude, derived  
 From intricate cabals of treacherous friends.  
 I, who on shipboard lived from earliest  
 youth,  
 Could represent the countenance horrible  
 Of the vexed waters, and the indignant  
 rage  
 Of Auster and Boötes. Fifty years  
 Over the well-steered galleys did I rule :—  
 From huge Pelorus to the Atlantic pillars,  
 Rises no mountain to mine eyes unknown ;  
 And the broad gulfs I traversed oft and  
 oft :  
 Of every cloud which in the heavens might  
 stir  
 I knew the force ; and hence the rough  
 sea's pride  
 Availd not to my Vessel's overthrow.  
 What noble pomp and frequent have not I  
 On regal decks beheld ! yet in the end  
 I learned that one poor moment can suffice  
 To equalise the lofty and the low.  
 We sail the sea of life—a *Calm* One finds,  
 And One a *Tempest*—and, the voyage o'er,  
 Death is the quiet haven of us all.  
 If more of my condition ye would know,  
 Savona was my birth-place, and I sprang

Of noble parents ; seventy years and three  
Lived I—then yielded to a slow disease.

## V

TRUE is it that Ambrosio Salinero  
With an untoward fate was long involved  
In odious litigation ; and full long,  
Fate harder still ! had he to endure assaults  
Of racking malady. And true it is  
That not the less a frank courageous heart  
And buoyant spirit triumphed over pain ;  
And he was strong to follow in the steps  
Of the fair Muses. Not a covert path  
Leads to the dear Parnassian forest's shade,  
That might from him be hidden ; not a  
track

Mounts to pellucid Hippocrene, but he  
Had traced its windings.—This Savona  
knows,

Yet no sepulchral honours to her Son  
She paid, for in our age the heart is ruled  
Only by gold. And now a simple stone  
Inscribed with this memorial here is raised  
By his bereft, his lonely, Chiabrera.  
Think not, O Passenger ! who read'st the  
lines,

That an exceeding love hath dazzled me ;  
No—he was One whose memory ought to  
spread

Where'er Permessus bears an honoured  
name,

And live as long as its pure stream shall  
flow.

## VI

DESTINED to war from very infancy  
Was I, Roberto Dati, and I took  
In Malta the white symbol of the Cross :  
Nor in life's vigorous season did I shun  
Hazard or toil ; among the sands was  
seen

Of Libya ; and not seldom, on the banks  
Of wide Hungarian Danube, 'twas my lot  
To hear the sanguinary trumpet sounded.  
So lived I, and repined not at such fate :  
This only grieves me, for it seems a wrong,  
That stripped of arms I to my end am  
brought

On the soft down of my paternal home.  
Yet haply Arno shall be spared all cause  
To blush for me. Thou, loiter not nor  
halt

In thy appointed way, and bear in mind  
How fleeting and how frail is human life !

## VII

O FLOWER of all that springs from gentle  
blood,

And all that generous nurture breeds to  
make

Youth amiable ; O friend so true of soul  
To fair Aglaia ; by what envy moved,  
Lelius ! has death cut short thy brilliant  
day

In its sweet opening ? and what dire mis-  
hap

Has from Savona torn her best delight ?

For thee she mourns, nor e'er will cease to  
mourn ;

And, should the out-pourings of her eyes  
suffice not

For her heart's grief, she will entreat Sebeto  
Not to withhold his bounteous aid, Sebeto  
Who saw thee, on his margin, yield to  
death,

In the chaste arms of thy beloved Love !  
What profit riches ? what does youth avail ?  
Dust are our hopes ;—I, weeping bitterly,  
Penned these sad lines, nor can forbear to  
pray

That every gentle Spirit hither led  
May read them, not without some bitter  
tears.

## VIII

NOT without heavy grief of heart did He  
On whom the duty fell (for at that time  
The father sojourned in a distant land)  
Deposit in the hollow of this tomb  
A brother's Child, most tenderly beloved !  
FRANCESCO was the name the Youth had  
borne,

POZZOBONNELLI his illustrious house ;  
And, when beneath this stone the Corse  
was laid,

The eyes of all Savona streamed with tears.  
Alas ! the twentieth April of his life  
Had scarcely flowered : and at this early  
time,

By genuine virtue he inspired a hope  
That greatly cheered his country : to his  
kin

He promised comfort ; and the flattering  
thoughts



His friends had in their fondness entertained,<sup>1</sup>  
 He suffered not to languish or decay.  
 Now is there not good reason to break  
 forth  
 Into a passionate lament?—O Soul !  
 Short while a Pilgrim in our nether world,  
 Do thou enjoy the calm empyreal air ;  
 And round this earthly tomb let roses rise,  
 An everlasting spring ! in memory  
 Of that delightful fragrance which was once  
 From thy mild manners quietly exhaled.

## IX

PAUSE, courteous Spirit !—Balbi supplicates  
 That Thou, with no reluctant voice, for him  
 Here laid in mortal darkness, wouldst prefer  
 A prayer to the Redeemer of the world.  
 This to the dead by sacred right belongs ;  
 All else is nothing.—Did occasion suit  
 To tell his worth, the marble of this tomb  
 Would ill suffice : for Plato's lore sublime,  
 And all the wisdom of the Stagyrte,  
 Enriched and beautified his studious mind :  
 With Archimedes also he conversed  
 As with a chosen friend ; nor did he leave  
 Those laureat wreaths ungathered which the  
 Nymphs  
 Twine near their loved Permessus.—Finally,  
 Himself above each lower thought uplifting,  
 His ears he closed to listen to the songs  
 Which Sion's Kings did consecrate of old ;  
 And his Permessus found on Lebanon.  
 A blessed Man ! who of protracted days  
 Made not, as thousands do, a vulgar sleep ;  
 But truly did *He* live his life. Urbino,  
 Take pride in him !—O Passenger, fare-  
 well !

## MATERNAL GRIEF

This was in part an overflow from the Solitary's  
 description of his own and his wife's feelings upon  
 the decease of their children. (See "Excursion,"  
 book III.)

DEPARTED Child ! I could forget thee once  
 Though at my bosom nursed ; this woeful  
 gain

<sup>1</sup> In justice to the Author, I subjoin the original :—  
 \_\_\_\_\_ e degli amici  
 Non lasciava languire i bei pensieri.

Thy dissolution brings, that in my soul  
 Is present and perpetually abides  
 A shadow, never, never to be displaced  
 By the returning substance, seen or touched,  
 Seen by mine eyes, or clasped in my em-  
 brace.

Absence and death how differ they ! and  
 how

Shall I admit that nothing can restore  
 What one short sigh so easily removed ?—  
 Death, life, and sleep, reality and thought,  
 Assist me, God, their boundaries to know,  
 O teach me calm submission to thy Will !

The Child she mourned had overstepped  
 the pale

Of Infancy, but still did breathe the air  
 That sanctifies its confines, and partook  
 Reflected beams of that celestial light  
 To all the Little-ones on sinful earth  
 Not unvouchsafed—a light that warmed  
 and cheered

Those several qualities of heart and mind  
 Which, in her own blest nature, rooted  
 deep,

Daily before the Mother's watchful eye,  
 And not hers only, their peculiar charms  
 Unfolded,—beauty, for its present self,  
 And for its promises to future years,  
 With not unfrequent rapture fondly hailed.

Have you espied upon a dewy lawn  
 A pair of Leverets each provoking each  
 To a continuance of their fearless sport,  
 Two separate Creatures in their several  
 gifts

Abounding, but so fashioned that, in all  
 That Nature prompts them to display,  
 their looks,

Their starts of motion and their fits of  
 rest,

An undistinguishable style appears  
 And character of gladness, as if Spring  
 Lodged in their innocent bosoms, and the  
 spirit

Of the rejoicing morning were their own ?

Such union, in the lovely Girl maintained  
 And her twin Brother, had the parent  
 seen,

Ere, pouncing like a ravenous bird of  
 prey,

Death in a moment parted them, and left  
 The Mother, in her turns of anguish, worse  
 Than desolate ; for oft-times from the  
 sound

Of the survivor's sweetest voice (dear child,

He knew it not) and from his happiest looks,  
 Did she extract the food of self-reproach,  
 As one that lived ungrateful for the stay  
 By Heaven afforded to uphold her maimed  
 And tottering spirit. And full oft the Boy,  
 Now first acquainted with distress and grief,  
 Shrunk from his Mother's presence, shunned with fear  
 Her sad approach, and stole away to find,  
 In his known haunts of joy where'er he might,  
 A more congenial object. But, as time  
 Softened her pangs and reconciled the child  
 To what he saw, he gradually returned,  
 Like a scared Bird encouraged to renew  
 A broken intercourse; and, while his eyes  
 Were yet with pensive fear and gentle awe  
 Turned upon her who bore him, she would stoop  
 To imprint a kiss that lacked not power to spread  
 Faint colour over both their pallid cheeks,  
 And stilled his tremulous lip. Thus they were calmed  
 And cheered; and now together breathe fresh air  
 In open fields; and when the glare of day  
 Is gone, and twilight to the Mother's wish  
 Befriends the observance, readily they join  
 In walks whose boundary is the lost One's grave,  
 Which he with flowers hath planted, finding there  
 Amusement, where the Mother does not miss  
 Dear consolation, kneeling on the turf  
 In prayer, yet blending with that solemn rite  
 Of pious faith the vanities of grief;  
 For such, by pitying Angels and by Spirits  
 Transferred to regions upon which the clouds  
 Of our weak nature rest not, must be deemed  
 Those willing tears, and unforbidden sighs,  
 And all those tokens of a cherished sorrow,  
 Which, soothed and sweetened by the grace of Heaven  
 As now it is, seems to her own fond heart,  
 Immortal as the love that gave it being.

1810.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD

Written at Allanbank, Grasmere. Picture of my Daughter Catharine, who died the year after.

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild;  
 And Innocence hath privilege in her  
 To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes;  
 And feats of cunning; and the pretty round  
 Of trespasses, affected to provoke  
 Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.  
 And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,  
 Not less if unattended and alone  
 Than when both young and old sit gathered round  
 And take delight in its activity;  
 Even so this happy Creature of herself  
 Is all-sufficient, solitude to her  
 Is blithe society, who fills the air  
 With gladness and involuntary songs.  
 Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's  
 Forth-startled from the fern where she lay  
 couched;  
 Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir  
 Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-  
 flowers,  
 Or from before it chasing wantonly  
 The many-coloured images imprint  
 Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

1811.

### SPANISH GUERILLAS

THEY seek, are sought; to daily battle led,  
 Shrink not, though far outnumbered by  
 their Foes,  
 For they have learnt to open and to close  
 The ridges of grim war; and at their head  
 Are captains such as erst their country bred  
 Or fostered, self-supported chiefs,—like  
 those  
 Whom hardy Rome was fearful to oppose;  
 Whose desperate shock the Carthaginian  
 fled.  
 In One who lived unknown a shepherd's  
 life  
 Redoubted Viriatus breathes again;  
 And Mina, nourished in the studious shade,  
 With that great Leader<sup>1</sup> vies, who, sick of  
 strife  
 And bloodshed, longed in quiet to be laid  
 In some green island of the western main.

1811.

<sup>1</sup> Sertorius.

"THE POWER OF ARMIES IS A  
VISIBLE THING"

THE power of Armies is a visible thing,  
Formal, and circumscribed in time and  
space;

But who the limits of that power shall  
trace

Which a brave People into light can bring  
Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating  
By just revenge inflamed? No foot may  
chase,

No eye can follow, to a fatal place  
That power, that spirit, whether on the  
wing

Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the  
wind

Within its awful caves.—From year to year  
Springs this indigenous produce far and  
near;

No craft this subtle element can bind,  
Rising like water from the soil, to find  
In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

1811.

"HERE PAUSE: THE POET CLAIMS  
AT LEAST THIS PRAISE"

HERE pause: the poet claims at least this  
praise,

That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope  
Of his pure song, which did not shrink  
from hope

In the worst moment of these evil days;  
From hope, the paramount *duty* that  
Heaven lays,

For its own honour, on man's suffering  
heart.

Never may from our souls one truth  
depart—

That an accursed thing it is to gaze  
On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye;  
Nor—touched with due abhorrence of *their*  
guilt

For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood  
is spilt,

And justice labours in extremity—  
Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,  
O wretched man, the throne of tyranny!

1811.

EPISTLE

TO SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT,  
BART.

FROM THE SOUTH-WEST COAST OF CUMBERLAND

1811

This poem opened, when first written, with a paragraph that has been transferred as an introduction to the first series of my Scotch Memorials. The journey, of which the first part is here described, was from Grasmere to Bootle on the south-west coast of Cumberland, the whole among mountain roads through a beautiful country; and we had fine weather. The verses end with our breakfast at the head of Yewdale in a yeoman's house, which, like all the other property in that sequestered vale, has passed or is passing into the hands of Mr. James Marshall of Monk Coniston,—in Mr. Knott's, the late owner's, time called Waterhead. Our hostess married a Mr. Oldfield, a lieutenant in the Navy: they lived together for some time at Hacket, where she still resides as his widow. It was in front of that house, on the mountain side, near which stood the peasant who, while we were passing at a distance, saluted us, waving a kerchief in her hand as described in the poem. (This matron and her husband were then residing at the Hacket. The house and its inmates are referred to in the fifth book of the "Excursion," in the passage beginning—

"You behold,  
High on the breast of yon dark mountain, dark  
With stony barrenness, a shining speck."—J. C.)

The dog which we met with soon after our starting belonged to Mr. Rowlandson, who for forty years was curate of Grasmere in place of the rector, who lived to extreme old age in a state of insanity. Of this Mr. R. much might be said both with reference to his character, and the way in which he was regarded by his parishioners. He was a man of a robust frame, had a firm voice and authoritative manner, of strong natural talents, of which he was himself conscious, for he has been heard to say (it grieves me to add) with an oath—"If I had been brought up at college I should have been a bishop." Two vices used to struggle in him for mastery, avarice and the love of strong drink: but avarice, as is common in like cases, always got the better of its opponent; for, though he was often intoxicated, it was never, I believe, at his own expense. As has been said of one in a more exalted station, he would take any *given* quantity. I have heard a story of him which is worth the telling. One summer's morning, our Grasmere curate, after a night's carousing in the vale of Langdale, on his return home, hav-

ing reached a point near which the whole of the vale of Grasmere might be seen with the lake immediately below him, stepped aside and sat down on the turf. After looking for some time at the landscape, then in the perfection of its morning beauty, he exclaimed—"Good God, that I should have led so long such a life in such a place!"—This no doubt was deeply felt by him at the time, but I am not authorised to say that any noticeable amendment followed. Penuriousness strengthened upon him as his body grew feebler with age. He had purchased property and kept some land in his own hands, but he could not find in his heart to lay out the necessary hire for labourers at the proper season, and consequently he has often been seen in half-dogage working his hay in the month of November by moonlight, a melancholy sight which I myself have witnessed. Notwithstanding all that has been said, this man, on account of his talents and superior education, was looked up to by his parishioners, who, without a single exception, lived at that time (and most of them upon their own small inheritances) in a state of republican equality, a condition favourable to the growth of kindly feelings among them, and in a striking degree exclusive to temptations to gross vice and scandalous behaviour. As a pastor their curate did little or nothing for them; but what could more strikingly set forth the efficacy of the Church of England through its Ordinances and Liturgy than that, in spite of the unworthiness of the minister, his church was regularly attended; and, though there was not much appearance in his flock of what might be called animated piety, intoxication was rare, and dissolute morals unknown? With the Bible they were for the most part well acquainted; and, as was strikingly shown when they were under affliction, must have been supported and comforted by habitual belief in those truths which it is the aim of the Church to inculcate.—*Loughrigg Tarn*. This beautiful pool and the surrounding scene are minutely described in my little Book on the Lakes. Sir G. H. Beaumont, in the earlier part of his life, was induced, by his love of nature and the art of painting, to take up his abode at Old Brathay, about three miles from this spot, so that he must have seen it under many aspects; and he was so much pleased with it that he purchased the Tarn with a view to build, near it, such a residence as is alluded to in this Epistle. Baronets and knights were not so common in that day as now, and Sir Michael le Fleming, not liking to have a rival in that kind of distinction so near him, claimed a sort of lordship over the territory, and showed dispositions little in unison with those of Sir G. Beaumont, who was eminently a lover of peace. The project of building was in conse-

quence given up, Sir George retaining possession of the Tarn. Many years afterwards a Kendal tradesman born upon its banks applied to me for the purchase of it, and accordingly it was sold for the sum that had been given for it, and the money was laid out under my direction upon a substantial oak fence for a certain number of yew trees to be planted in Grasmere churchyard; two were planted in each enclosure, with a view to remove, after a certain time, the one which throve the least. After several years, the stouter plant being left, the others were taken up and placed in other parts of the same churchyard, and were adequately fenced at the expense and under the care of the late Mr. Barber, Mr. Greenwood, and myself: the whole eight are now thriving, and are already an ornament to a place which, during late years, has lost much of its rustic simplicity by the introduction of iron palisades to fence off family burying-grounds, and by numerous monuments, some of them in very bad taste; from which this place of burial was in my memory quite free. See the lines in the sixth book of the "Excursion" beginning—"Green is the churchyard, beautiful and green." The "Epistle" to which these notes refer, though written so far back as 1804, was carefully revised so late as 1842, previous to its publication. I am loth to add, that it was never seen by the person to whom it is addressed. So sensible am I of the deficiencies in all that I write, and so far does everything that I attempt fall short of what I wish it to be, that even private publication, if such a term may be allowed, requires more resolution than I can command. I have written to give vent to my own mind, and not without hope that, some time or other, kindred minds might benefit by my labours: but I am inclined to believe I should never have ventured to send forth any verses of mine to the world if it had not been done on the pressure of personal occasions. Had I been a rich man, my productions, like this "Epistle," the tragedy of the "Borderers," etc., would most likely have been confined to manuscript.

FAR from our home by Grasmere's quiet  
Lake,  
From the Vale's peace which all her fields  
partake,  
Here on the bleakest point of Cumbria's  
shore  
We sojourn stunned by Ocean's ceaseless  
roar;  
While, day by day, grim neighbour! huge  
Black Comb  
Frowns deepening visibly his native gloom,  
Unless, perchance rejecting in despite

What on the Plain *we* have of warmth and  
 light,  
 In his own storms he hides himself from  
 sight.  
 Rough is the time; and thoughts, that  
 would be free  
 From heaviness, oft fly, dear Friend, to  
 thee;  
 Turn from a spot where neither sheltered  
 road  
 Nor hedge-row screen invites my steps  
 abroad;  
 Where one poor Plane-tree, having as it  
 might  
 Attained a stature twice a tall man's height,  
 Hopeless of further growth, and brown and  
 sere  
 Through half the summer, stands with top  
 cut sheer,  
 Like an unshifting weathercock which proves  
 How cold the quarter that the wind best  
 loves,  
 Or like a Centinel that, evermore  
 Darkening the window, ill defends the door  
 Of this unfinished house—a Fortress bare,  
 Where strength has been the Builder's only  
 care;  
 Whose rugged walls may still for years  
 demand  
 The final polish of the Plasterer's hand.  
 —This Dwelling's Inmate more than three  
 weeks space  
 And oft a Prisoner in the cheerless place,  
 I—of whose touch the fiddle would com-  
 plain,  
 Whose breath would labour at the flute in  
 vain,  
 In music all unversed, nor blessed with skill  
 A bridge to copy, or to paint a mill,  
 Tired of my books, a scanty company!  
 And tired of listening to the boisterous sea—  
 Pace between door and window muttering  
 rhyme,  
 An old resource to cheat a froward time!  
 Though these dull hours (mine is it, or their  
 shame?)  
 Would tempt me to renounce that humble  
 aim,  
 —But if there be a Muse who, free to take  
 Her seat upon Olympus, doth forsake  
 Those heights (like Phœbus when his golden  
 locks  
 He veiled, attendant on Thessalian flocks)  
 And, in disguise, a Milkmaid with her pail

Trips down the pathways of some winding  
 dale;  
 Or, like a Mermaid, warbles on the shores  
 To fishers mending nets beside their doors;  
 Or, Pilgrim-like, on forest moss reclined,  
 Gives plaintive ditties to the heedless wind,  
 Or listens to its play among the boughs  
 Above her head and so forgets her vows—  
 If such a Visitant of Earth there be  
 And she would deign this day to smile on  
 me  
 And aid my verse, content with local bounds  
 Of natural beauty and life's daily rounds,  
 Thoughts, chances, sights, or doings, which  
 we tell  
 Without reserve to those whom we love  
 well—  
 Then haply, Beaumont! words in current  
 clear  
 Will flow, and on a welcome page appear  
 Duly before thy sight, unless they perish  
 here.  
 What shall I treat of? News from Mona's  
 Isle?  
 Such have we, but unvaried in its style;  
 No tales of Runagates fresh landed, whence  
 And wherefore fugitive or on what pretence;  
 Of feasts, or scandal, eddying like the  
 wind  
 Most restlessly alive when most confined.  
 Ask not of me, whose tongue can best  
 appease  
 The mighty tumults of the HOUSE OF  
 KEYS;  
 The last year's cup whose Ram or Heifer  
 gained,  
 What slopes are planted, or what mosses  
 drained:  
 An eye of fancy only can I cast  
 On that proud pageant now at hand or  
 past,  
 When full five hundred boats in trim array,  
 With nets and sails outspread and streamers  
 gay,  
 And chanted hymns and stiller voice of  
 prayer,  
 For the old Manx-harvest to the Deep re-  
 pair,  
 Soon as the herring-shoals at distance shine  
 Like beds of moonlight shifting on the brine.  
 Mona from our Abode is daily seen,  
 But with a wilderness of waves between;  
 And by conjecture only can we speak  
 Of aught transacted there in bay or creek;

No tidings reach us thence from town or field,

Only faint news her mountain sunbeams yield,

And some we gather from the misty air,  
And some the hovering clouds, our telegraph, declare.

But these poetic mysteries I withhold;  
For Fancy hath her fits both hot and cold,  
And should the colder fit with You be on  
When You might read, my credit would be gone.

Let more substantial themes the pen engage,

And nearer interests culled from the opening stage

Of our migration.—Ere the welcome dawn  
Had from the east her silver star withdrawn,

The Wain stood ready, at our Cottage-door;  
Thoughtfully freighted with a various store;  
And long or ere the uprising of the Sun  
O'er dew-damp'd dust our journey was begun,

A needful journey, under favouring skies,  
Through peopled Vales; yet something in the guise

Of those old Patriarchs when from well to well

They roamed through Wastes where now the tented Arabs dwell.

Say first, to whom did we the charge confide,

Who promptly undertook the Wain to guide  
Up many a sharply-twining road and down,  
And over many a wide hill's craggy crown,  
Through the quick turns of many a hollow nook,

And the rough bed of many an unbridged brook?

A blooming Lass—who in her better hand  
Bore a light switch, her sceptre of command  
When, yet a slender Girl, she often led,  
Skilful and bold, the horse and burthened sled<sup>1</sup>

From the peat-yielding Moss on Gowdar's head.

What could go wrong with such a Charioteer  
For goods and chattels, or those Infants dear,

A Pair who smilingly sate side by side,  
Our hope confirming that the salt-sea tide  
Whose free embraces we were bound to seek,

<sup>1</sup> A local word for Sledge.

Would their lost strength restore and freshen the pale cheek?

Such hope did either Parent entertain  
Pacing behind along the silent lane.

Blithe hopes and happy musings soon took flight,

For lo! an uncouth melancholy sight—  
On a green bank a creature stood forlorn  
Just half protruded to the light of morn,  
Its hinder part concealed by hedge-row thorn  
The Figure called to mind a beast of prey  
Stript of its frightful powers by slow decay,  
And, though no longer upon rapine bent,  
Dim memory keeping of its old intent.

We started, looked again with anxious eyes,  
And in that griesly object recognise

The Curate's Dog—his long-tryed friend,  
for they,

As well we knew, together had grown grey.  
The Master died, his drooping servant's grief

Found at the Widow's feet some sad relief;  
Yet still he lived in pining discontent,  
Sadness which no indulgence could prevent;  
Hence whole day wanderings, broken nightly sleeps

And lonesome watch that out of doors he keeps;

Not oftentimes, I trust, as we, poor brute!  
Espied him on his legs sustained, blank, mute,

And of all visible motion destitute,  
So that the very heaving of his breath  
Seemed stopt, though by some other power than death.

Long as we gazed upon the form and face,  
A mild domestic pity kept its place,  
Unscared by haunting fancies of strange hue

That haunted us in spite of what we knew.  
Even now I sometimes think of him as lost  
In second-sight appearances, or crost  
By spectral shapes of guilt, or to the ground,  
On which he stood, by spells unnatural bound,

Like a gaunt shaggy Porter forced to wait  
In days of old romance at Archimago's gate.

Advancing Summer, Nature's law fulfilled,

The choristers in every grove had stilled;  
But we, we lacked not music of our own,  
For lightsome Fanny had thus early thrown,  
Mid the gay prattle of those infant tongues,

Some notes prelusive, from the round of  
songs  
With which, more zealous than the liveliest  
bird  
That in wild Arden's brakes was ever heard,  
Her work and her work's partners she can  
cheer,  
The whole day long, and all days of the  
year.

Thus gladdened from our own dear Vale  
we pass  
And soon approach Diana's Looking-glass!  
To Loughrigg-tarn, round clear and bright  
as heaven,

Such name Italian fancy would have given,  
Ere on its banks the few grey cabins rose  
That yet disturb not its concealed repose  
More than the feeblest wind that idly blows.

Ah, Beaumont! when an opening in the  
road  
Stopped me at once by charm of what it  
showed,

The encircling region vividly exprest  
Within the mirror's depth, a world at rest—  
Sky streaked with purple, grove and craggy  
*field*,<sup>1</sup>

And the smooth green of many a pendent  
field,

And, quieted and soothed, a torrent small,  
A little daring would-be waterfall,  
One chimney smoking and its azure wreath,  
Associate all in the calm Pool beneath,  
With here and there a faint imperfect gleam  
Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam—  
What wonder at this hour of stillness deep,  
A shadowy link 'tween wakefulness and  
sleep,

When Nature's self, amid such blending,  
seems

To render visible her own soft dreams,  
If, mixed with what appeared of rock,  
lawn, wood,

Fondly embosomed in the tranquil flood,  
A glimpse I caught of that Abode, by  
Thee

Designed to rise in humble privacy,  
A lowly Dwelling, here to be outspread,  
Like a small Hamlet, with its bashful head  
Half hid in native trees. Alas 'tis not,  
Nor ever was; I sighed, and left the spot  
Unconscious of its own untoward lot,  
And thought in silence, with regret too keen,

<sup>1</sup> A word common in the country, signifying  
shelter, as in Scotland.

Of unexperienced joys that might have  
been;

Of neighbourhood and intermingling arts,  
And golden summer days uniting cheerful  
hearts.

But time, irrevocable time, is flown.  
And let us utter thanks for blessings sown  
And reaped—what hath been, and what is,  
our own.

Not far we travelled ere a shout of glee,  
Startling us all, dispersed my reverie;  
Such shout as many a sportive echo meeting  
Oft-times from Alpine *chalets* sends a  
greeting.

Whence the blithe hail? behold a Peasant  
stand

On high, a kerchief waving in her hand!  
Not unexpected that by early day  
Our little Band would thrid this mountain  
way,

Before her cottage on the bright hill side  
She hath advanced with hope to be descried.  
Right gladly answering signals we displayed,  
Moving along a tract of morning shade,  
And vocal wishes sent of like good will  
To our kind Friend high on the sunny hill—  
Luminous region, fair as if the prime  
Were tempting all astir to look aloft or  
climb;

Only the centre of the shining cot  
With door left open makes a gloomy spot,  
Emblem of those dark corners sometimes  
found

Within the happiest breast on earthly  
ground.

Rich prospect left behind of stream and  
vale,

And mountain-tops, a barren ridge we  
scale;

Descend, and reach, in Yewdale's depths,  
a plain

With haycocks studded, striped with  
yellowing grain—

An area level as a Lake and spread  
Under a rock too steep for man to tread,  
Where sheltered from the north and bleak  
northwest

Aloft the Raven hangs a visible nest,  
Fearless of all assaults that would her  
brood molest.

Hot sunbeams fill the steaming vale; but  
hark,

At our approach, a jealous watch-dog's  
bark,

Noise that brings forth no liveried Page of state,  
 But the whole household, that our coming wait.  
 With Young and Old warm greetings we exchange,  
 And jocund smiles, and toward the lowly Grange  
 Press forward by the teasing dogs unscared.  
 Entering, we find the morning meal prepared:  
 So down we sit, though not till each had cast  
 Pleased looks around the delicate repast—  
 Rich cream, and snow-white eggs fresh from the nest,  
 With amber honey from the mountain's breast;  
 Strawberries from lane or woodland, offering wild  
 Of children's industry, in hillocks piled;  
 Cakes for the nonce, and butter fit to lie  
 Upon a lordly dish; frank hospitality  
 Where simple art with bounteous nature vied,  
 And cottage comfort shuned not seemly pride.  
 Kind Hostess! Handmaid also of the feast,  
 If thou be lovelier than the kindling East,  
 Words by thy presence unrestrained may speak  
 Of a perpetual dawn from brow and cheek  
 Instinct with light whose sweetest promise lies,  
 Never retiring, in thy large dark eyes,  
 Dark but to every gentle feeling true,  
 As if their lustre flowed from ether's purest blue.  
 Let me not ask what tears may have been wept  
 By those bright eyes, what weary vigils kept,  
 Beside that hearth what sighs may have been heaved  
 For wounds inflicted, nor what toil relieved  
 By fortitude and patience, and the grace  
 Of heaven in pity visiting the place.  
 Not unadvisedly those secret springs  
 I leave unsearched: enough that memory clings,  
 Here as elsewhere, to notices that make  
 Their own significance for hearts awake,  
 To rural incidents, whose genial powers  
 Filled with delight three summer morning hours.

More could my pen report of grave or gay  
 That through our gipsy travel cheered the way;  
 But, bursting forth above the waves, the Sun  
 Laughs at my pains, and seems to say,  
 "Be done."  
 Yet, Beaumont, thou wilt not, I trust, reprove  
 This humble offering made by Truth to Love,  
 Nor chide the Muse that stooped to break a spell  
 Which might have else been on me yet:—  
 FAREWELL.  
 1811.

UPON PERUSING THE FOREGOING EPISTLE  
 THIRTY YEARS AFTER ITS COMPOSITION

SOON did he Almighty Giver of all rest  
 Take those dear young Ones to a fearless nest;  
 And in Death's arms has long reposed the Friend  
 For whom this simple Register was penned.  
 Thanks to the moth that spared it for our eyes;  
 And Strangers even the slighted Scroll may prize,  
 Moved by the touch of kindred sympathies.  
 For—save the calm, repentance sheds o'er strife  
 Raised by remembrances of misused life,  
 The light from past endeavours purely willed  
 And by Heaven's favour happily fulfilled;  
 Save hope that we, yet bound to Earth, may share  
 The joys of the Departed—what so fair  
 As blameless pleasure, not without some tears,  
 Reviewed through Love's transparent veil of years?

NOTE.—LOUGHRIGG TARN, alluded to in the foregoing Epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the Lake Nemi, or *Speculum Diana* as it is often called, not only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked by the eminence of Langdale Pikes as Lake Nemi is by that of Monte Calvo. Since this Epistle was written Loughrigg Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling of many natural



clumps of wood, relics of the old forest, particularly upon the farm called "The Oaks," so called from the abundance of that tree which grew there.

It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George Beaumont did not carry into effect his intention of constructing here a Summer Retreat in the style I have described; as his taste would have set an example how buildings, with all the accommodations modern society requires, might be introduced even into the most secluded parts of this country without injuring their native character.

### UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE

PAINTED BY SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART.

This was written when we dwelt in the Parsonage at Grasmere. The principal features of the picture are Bredon Hill and Cloud Hill near Coleorton. I shall never forget the happy feeling with which my heart was filled when I was impelled to compose this Sonnet. We resided only two years in this house; and during the last half of the time, which was after this poem had been written, we lost our two children, Thomas and Catharine. Our sorrow upon these events often brought it to my mind, and cast me upon the support to which the last line of it gives expression—

"The appropriate calm of blest eternity."

It is scarcely necessary to add that we still possess the Picture.

PRAISED be the Art whose subtle power  
could stay  
Yon cloud, and fix it in that glorious shape;  
Nor would permit the thin smoke to escape,  
Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the  
day;  
Which stopped that band of travellers on  
their way,  
Ere they were lost within the shady wood;  
And showed the Bark upon the glassy flood  
For ever anchored in her sheltering bay.  
Soul-soothing Art! whom Morning, Noon-  
tide, Even,  
Do serve with all their changeful pageantry;  
Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,  
Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast  
given  
To one brief moment caught from fleeting  
time  
The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

1811.

### INSCRIPTIONS

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON, THE  
SEAT OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT, BART.,  
LEICESTERSHIRE

In the grounds of Coleorton these verses are engraved on a stone placed near the Tree, which was thriving and spreading when I saw it in the summer of 1841.

THE embowering rose, the acacia, and the  
pine,  
Will not unwillingly their place resign;  
If but the Cedar thrive that near them  
stands,  
Planted by Beaumont's and by Wordsworth's  
hands.  
One wooed the silent Art with studious  
pains:  
These groves have heard the Other's pensive  
strains;  
Devoted thus, their spirits did unite  
By interchange of knowledge and delight.  
May Nature's kindest powers sustain the  
Tree,  
And Love protect it from all injury!  
And when its potent branches, wide out-  
thrown,  
Darken the brow of this memorial Stone,  
Here may some Painter sit in future days,  
Some future Poet meditate his lays;  
Not mindless of that distant age renowned  
When Inspiration hovered o'er this ground,  
The haunt of him who sang how spear and  
shield  
In civil conflict met on Bosworth-field;  
And of that famous Youth, full soon  
removed  
From earth, perhaps by Shakspeare's self  
approved,  
Fletcher's Associate, Jonson's Friend  
beloved. 1808.

IN A GARDEN OF SIR GEORGE  
BEAUMONT, BART.

This Niche is in the sandstone-rock in the winter-garden at Coleorton, which garden, as has been elsewhere said, was made under our direction out of an old unsightly quarry. While the labourers were at work, Mrs. Wordsworth, my Sister, and I used to amuse ourselves occasion-

ally in scooping this seat out of the soft stone. It is of the size, with something of the appearance, of a Stall in a Cathedral. This inscription is not engraven, as the former and the two following are, in the grounds.

OFT is the medal faithful to its trust  
When temples, columns, towers, are laid in  
dust ;

And 'tis a common ordinance of fate  
That things obscure and small outlive the  
great :

Hence, when yon mansion and the flowery  
trim

Of this fair garden, and its alleys dim,  
And all its stately trees, are passed away,  
This little Niche, unconscious of decay,  
Perchance may still survive. And be it  
known

That it was scooped within the living  
stone, —

Not by the sluggish and ungrateful pains  
Of labourer plodding for his daily gains,  
But by an industry that wrought in love ;  
With help from female hands, that proudly  
strove

To aid the work, what time these walks  
and bowers

Were shaped to cheer dark winter's lonely  
hours. 1811.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF SIR GEORGE  
BEAUMONT, BART., AND IN HIS NAME,  
FOR AN URN, PLACED BY HIM AT THE  
TERMINATION OF A NEWLY-PLANTED  
AVENUE, IN THE SAME GROUNDS

YE Lime-trees, ranged before this hallowed  
Urn,

Shoot forth with lively power at Spring's  
return ;

And be not slow a stately growth to rear  
Of pillars, branching off from year to  
year,

Till they have learned to frame a darksome  
aisle ; —

That may recall to mind that awful Pile  
Where Reynolds, 'mid our country's noblest  
dead,

In the last sanctity of fame is laid.

—There, though by right the excelling  
Painter sleep

Where Death and Glory a joint sabbath  
keep,

Yet not the less his Spirit would hold  
dear

Self-hidden praise, and Friendship's private  
tear :

Hence, on my patrimonial grounds, have I  
Raised this frail tribute to his memory ;  
From youth a zealous follower of the Art  
That he professed ; attached to him in  
heart ;

Admiring, loving, and with grief and  
pride

Feeling what England lost when Reynolds  
died. 1808.

FOR A SEAT IN THE GROVES OF  
COLEORTON.

BENEATH yon eastern ridge, the craggy  
bound,

Rugged and high, of Charnwood's forest  
ground

Stand yet, but, Stranger ! hidden from thy  
view,

The ivied Ruins of forlorn GRACE DIEU ;  
Erst a religious House, which day and  
night

With hymns resounded, and the chanted  
rite :

And when those rites had ceased, the Spot  
gave birth

To honourable Men of various worth :  
There, on the margin of a streamlet wild,  
Did Francis Beaumont sport, an eager  
child ;

There, under shadow of the neighbouring  
rocks,

Sang youthful tales of shepherds and their  
flocks ;

Unconscious prelude to heroic themes,  
Heart-breaking tears, and melancholy  
dreams

Of slighted love, and scorn, and jealous  
rage,

With which his genius shook the buskined  
stage.

Communities are lost, and Empires die,  
And things of holy use unhallowed lie ;

They perish ; — but the Intellect can raise,  
From airy words alone, a Pile that ne'er  
decays. 1811.

## SONG FOR THE SPINNING WHEEL

FOUNDED UPON A BELIEF PREVALENT  
AMONG THE PASTORAL VALES OF  
WESTMORELAND

The belief on which this is founded I have  
often heard expressed by an old neighbour of  
Grasmere.

SWIFTLY turn the murmuring wheel !  
Night has brought the welcome hour,  
When the weary fingers feel  
Help, as if from faery power ;  
Dewy night o'ershades the ground ;  
Turn the swift wheel round and round !

Now, beneath the starry sky,  
Couch the widely-scattered sheep ;—  
Ply the pleasant labour, ply !  
For the spindle, while they sleep,  
Runs with speed more smooth and fine,  
Gathering up a trustier line.

Short-lived likings may be bred  
By a glance from fickle eyes ;  
But true love is like the thread  
Which the kindly wool supplies,  
When the flocks are all at rest  
Sleeping on the mountain's breast.

1812.

COMPOSED ON THE EVE OF THE  
MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND IN  
THE VALE OF GRASMERE

WHAT need of clamorous bells, or ribands  
gay,  
These humble nuptials to proclaim or  
grace ?

Angels of love, look down upon the place ;  
Shed on the chosen vale a sun-bright day !  
Yet no proud gladness would the Bride dis-  
play

Even for such promise :—serious is her  
face,  
Modest her mien ; and she, whose thoughts  
keep pace

With gentleness, in that becoming way  
Will thank you. Faultless does the Maid  
appear ;

No disproportion in her soul, no strife :  
But, when the closer view of wedded life

Hath shown that nothing human can be  
clear

From frailty, for that insight may the Wife  
To her indulgent Lord become more dear.

1812.

## WATER-FOWL

OBSERVED FREQUENTLY OVER THE LAKES  
OF RYDAL AND GRASMERE

" Let me be allowed the aid of verse to describe  
the evolutions which these visitants sometimes  
perform, on a fine day towards the close of  
winter."—*Extract from the Author's Book on  
the Lakes.*

MARK how the feathered tenants of the  
flood,  
With grace of motion that might scarcely  
seem

Inferior to angelical, prolong  
Their curious pastime ! shaping in mid air  
(And sometimes with ambitious wing that  
soars

High as the level of the mountain-tops)  
A circuit ampler than the lake beneath—  
Their own domain ; but ever, while intent  
On tracing and retracing that large round,  
Their jubilant activity evolves  
Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,  
Upward and downward, progress intricate  
Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed  
Their indefatigable flight. 'Tis done—  
Ten times, or more, I fancied it had  
ceased ;

But lo ! the vanished company again  
Ascending ; they approach—I hear their  
wings,  
Faint, faint at first ; and then an eager  
sound,

Past in a moment—and as faint again !  
They tempt the sun to sport amid their  
plumes ;

They tempt the water, or the gleaming ice,  
To show them a fair image ; 'tis themselves,  
Their own fair forms, upon the glimmering  
plain,

Painted more soft and fair as they descend  
Almost to touch ;—then up again aloft,  
Up with a sally and a flash of speed,  
As if they scorned both resting-place and  
rest !

1812.

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Wordsworth and I, as mentioned in the "Epistle to Sir G. Beaumont," lived some time under its shadow.

THIS Height a ministering Angel might select :

For from the summit of BLACK COMB  
(dread name

Derived from clouds and storms!) the amplest range

Of unobstructed prospect may be seen

That British ground commands : — low dusky tracts,

Where Trent is nursed, far southward !  
Cambrian hills

To the south-west, a multitudinous show ;  
And, in a line of eye-sight linked with these,

The hoary peaks of Scotland that give birth  
To Tiviot's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and Clyde : —

Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth

Gigantic mountains rough with crags ;  
beneath,

Right at the imperial station's western base  
Main ocean, breaking audibly, and stretched

Far into silent regions blue and pale ; —

And visibly engirding Mona's Isle

That, as we left the plain, before our sight  
Stood like a lofty mount, uplifting slowly  
(Above the convex of the watery globe)

Into clear view the cultured fields that streak

Her habitable shores, but now appears

A dwindled object, and submits to lie

At the spectator's feet. — Yon azure ridge,

Is it a perishable cloud ? Or there

Do we behold the line of Erin's coast ?

Land sometimes by the roving shepherd-swain

(Like the bright confines of another world)  
Not doubtfully perceived. — Look home-

ward now !

In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene

<sup>1</sup> Black Comb stands at the southern extremity of Cumberland : its base covers a much greater extent of ground than any other mountain in those parts ; and, from its situation, the summit commands a more extensive view than any other point in Britain.

The spectacle, how pure ! — Of Nature's works,

In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea,

A revelation infinite it seems ;

Display august of man's inheritance,

Of Britain's calm felicity and power !

1813.

WRITTEN WITH A SLATE PENCIL  
ON A STONE, ON THE SIDE  
OF THE MOUNTAIN OF BLACK COMB

The circumstance alluded to at the conclusion of these verses was told me by Dr. Satterthwaite, who was Incumbent of Bootle, a small town at the foot of Black Comb. He had the particulars from one of the engineers who was employed in making trigonometrical surveys of that region.

STAY, bold Adventurer ; rest awhile thy limbs

On this commodious Seat ! for much remains

Of hard ascent before thou reach the top  
Of this huge Eminence, — from blackness named,

And, to far-travelled storms of sea and land,

A favourite spot of tournament and war !

But thee may no such boisterous visitants

Molest ; may gentle breezes fan thy brow ;

And neither cloud conceal, nor misty air

Bedim, the grand terraqueous spectacle,

From centre to circumference, unveiled !

Know, if thou grudge not to prolong thy rest,

That on the summit whither thou art bound,

A geographic Labourer pitched his tent,

With books supplied and instruments of art,

To measure height and distance ; lonely

task,

Week after week pursued ! — To him was given

Full many a glimpse (but sparingly bestowed

On timid man) of Nature's processes

Upon the exalted hills. He made report

That once, while there he plied his studious work

Within that canvas Dwelling, colours, lines,

And the whole surface of the out-spread map,

Became invisible : for all around  
Had darkness fallen—unthreatened, unpro-  
claimed—

As if the golden day itself had been  
Extinguished in a moment ; total gloom,  
In which he sate alone, with unclosed eyes,  
Upon the blinded mountain's silent top !

1813.

### NOVEMBER 1813

Now that all hearts are glad, all faces  
bright,

Our aged Sovereign sits, to the ebb and  
flow

Of states and kingdoms, to their joy or woe,  
Insensible. He sits deprived of sight,  
And lamentably wrapt in twofold night,  
Whom no weak hopes deceived ; whose  
mind ensued,

Through perilous war, with regal fortitude,  
Peace that should claim respect from lawless  
Might.

Dread King of Kings, vouchsafe a ray  
divine

To his forlorn condition ! let thy grace  
Upon his inner soul in mercy shine ;  
Permit his heart to kindle, and to embrace  
(Though it were only for a moment's space)  
The triumphs of this hour ; for they are  
THINE !

### THE EXCURSION

Something must now be said of this poem, but chiefly, as has been done through the whole of these notes, with reference to my personal friends, and especially to her who has perseveringly taken them down from my dictation. Towards the close of the first book stand the lines that were first written, beginning, "Nine tedious years," and ending, "Last human tenant of these ruined walls." These were composed in '95 at Race-down ; and for several passages describing the employment and demeanour of Margaret during her affliction, I was indebted to observations made in Dorsetshire, and afterwards at Alfoxden in Somersetshire, where I resided in '97 and '98. The lines towards the conclusion of the fourth book—beginning, "For, the man, who, in this spirit," to the words "intellectual soul"—were in order of time composed the next, either at Race-down or Alfoxden, I do not remember which. The rest of the poem was written in the vale of

Grasmere, chiefly during our residence at Allan Bank. The long poem on my own education was, together with many minor poems, composed while we lived at the cottage at Town-end. Perhaps my purpose of giving an additional interest to these my poems in the eyes of my nearest and dearest friends may be promoted by saying a few words upon the character of the Wanderer, the Solitary, and the Pastor, and some other of the persons introduced. And first, of the principal one, the Wanderer. My lamented friend Southey (for this is written a month after his decease) used to say that had he been born a papist, the course of life which would in all probability have been his was the one for which he was most fitted and most to his mind,—that of a Benedictine monk in a convent, furnished, as many once were and some still are, with an inexhaustible library. *Books*, as appears from many passages in his writings, and as was evident to those who had opportunities of observing his daily life, were in fact *his passion* ; and *wandering*, I can with truth affirm, was *mine* ; but this propensity in me was happily counteracted by inability from want of fortune to fulfil my wishes. But, had I been born in a class which would have deprived me of what is called a liberal education, it is not unlikely that, being strong in body, I should have taken to a way of life such as that in which my Pedlar passed the greater part of his days. At all events, I am here called upon freely to acknowledge that the character I have represented in his person is chiefly an idea of what I fancied my own character might have become in his circumstances. Nevertheless, much of what he says and does had an external existence that fell under my own youthful and subsequent observation. An individual named Patrick, by birth and education a Scotchman, followed this humble occupation for many years, and afterwards settled in the town of Kendal. He married a kinswoman of my wife's, and her sister Sarah was brought up from her ninth year under this good man's roof. My own imaginations I was happy to find clothed in reality, and fresh ones suggested, by what she reported of this man's tenderness of heart, his strong and pure imagination, and his solid attainments in literature, chiefly religious whether in prose or verse. At Hawkhead also, while I was a school-boy, there occasionally resided a Packman (the name then generally given to persons of this calling) with whom I had frequent conversations upon what had befallen him, and what he had observed, during his wandering life ; and, as was natural, we took much to each other : and, upon the subject of *Pedlarism* in general, as *then* followed, and its favourableness to an intimate knowledge of human concerns, not merely among the humbler

classes of society, I need say nothing here in addition to what is to be found in the "Excursion," and a note attached to it. Now for the Solitary. Of him I have much less to say. Not long after we took up our abode at Grasmere, came to reside there, from what motive I either never knew or have forgotten, a Scotchman a little past the middle of life, who had for many years been chaplain to a Highland regiment. He was in no respect as far as I know, an interesting character, though in his appearance there was a good deal that attracted attention, as if he had been shattered in fortune and not happy in mind. Of his quondam position I availed myself, to connect with the Wanderer, also a Scotchman, a character suitable to my purpose, the elements of which I drew from several persons with whom I had been connected, and who fell under my observation during frequent residences in London at the beginning of the French Revolution. The chief of these was, one may now say, a Mr. Fawcett, a preacher at a dissenting meeting-house at the Old Jewry. It happened to me several times to be one of his congregation through my connection with Mr. Nicholson of Cateaton Street, who at that time, when I had not many acquaintances in London, used often to invite me to dine with him on Sundays; and I took that opportunity (Mr. N. being a dissenter) of going to hear Fawcett, who was an able and eloquent man. He published a poem on war, which had a good deal of merit, and made me think more about him than I should otherwise have done. But his Christianity was probably never very deeply rooted; and, like many others in those times of like showy talents, he had not strength of character to withstand the effects of the French Revolution, and of the wild and lax opinions which had done so much towards producing it, and far more in carrying it forward in its extremes. Poor Fawcett, I have been told, became pretty much such a person as I have described; and early disappeared from the stage, having fallen into habits of intemperance, which I have heard (though I will not answer for the fact) hastened his death. Of him I need say no more: there were many like him at that time, which the world will never be without, but which were more numerous then for reasons too obvious to be dwelt upon.

To what is said of the Pastor in the poem I have little to add, but what may be deemed superfluous. It has ever appeared to me highly favourable to the beneficial influence of the Church of England upon all gradations and classes of society, that the patronage of its benefices is in numerous instances attached to the estates of noble families of ancient gentry; and accordingly I am gratified by the opportunity afforded me in the "Excursion," to pourtray the

character of a country clergyman of more than ordinary talents, born and bred in the upper ranks of society so as to partake of their refinements, and at the same time brought by his pastoral office and his love of rural life into intimate connection with the peasantry of his native district. To illustrate the relation which in my mind this Pastor bore to the Wanderer, and the resemblance between them, or rather the points of community in their nature, I likened one to an oak and the other to a sycamore; and, having here referred to this comparison, I need only add, I had no one individual in my mind, wishing rather to embody this idea than to break in upon the simplicity of it, by traits of individual character or of any peculiarity of opinion.

And now for a few words upon the scene where these interviews and conversations are supposed to occur. The scene of the first book of the poem is, I must own, laid in a tract of country not sufficiently near to that which soon comes into view in the second book, to agree with the fact. All that relates to Margaret and the ruined cottage, etc., was taken from observations made in the south-west of England, and certainly it would require more than seven-league boots to stretch in one morning from a common in Somersetshire or Dorsetshire to the heights of Furness Fells and the deep valleys they embosom. For thus dealing with space I need make, I trust, no apology, but my friends may be amused by the truth. In the poem, I suppose that the Pedlar and I ascended from a plain country up the vale of Langdale, and struck off a good way above the chapel to the western side of the vale. We ascended the hill and thence looked down upon the circular recess in which lies Blea-Tarn, chosen by the Solitary for his retreat. After we quit his cottage, passing over a low ridge we descend into another vale, that of Little Langdale, towards the head of which stands, embowered or partly shaded by yews and other trees, something between a cottage and a mansion or gentleman's house such as they once were in this country. This I convert into the Parsonage, and at the same time, and as by the waving of a magic wand, I turn the comparatively confined vale of Langdale, its Tarn, and the rude chapel which once adorned the valley, into the stately and comparatively spacious vale of Grasmere, its Lake, and its ancient Parish Church; and upon the side of Loughrigg Fell, at the foot of the Lake, and looking down upon it and the whole vale and its encompassing mountains, the Pastor is supposed by me to stand, when at sunset he addresses his companions in words which I hope my readers will remember, or I should not have taken the trouble of giving so much in detail the materials on which my

mind actually worked. Now for a few particulars of *fact* respecting the persons whose stories are told or characters are described by the different speakers. To Margaret I have already alluded. I will add here, that the lines beginning, "She was a woman of a steady mind," faithfully delineate, as far as they go, the character possessed in common by many women whom it has been my happiness to know in humble life; and that several of the most touching things which she is represented as saying and doing are taken from actual observation of the distresses and trials under which different persons were suffering, some of them strangers to me, and others daily under my notice. I was born too late to have a distinct remembrance of the origin of the American war, but the state in which I represent Robert's mind to be I had frequent opportunities of observing at the commencement of our rupture with France in '93, opportunities of which I availed myself in the story of the Female Vagrant as told in the poem on "Guilt and Sorrow." The account given by the Solitary towards the close of the second book, in all that belongs to the character of the Old Man, was taken from a Grasmere pauper, who was boarded in the last house quitting the vale on the road to Ambleside: the character of his hostess, and all that befell the poor man upon the mountain, belong to Paterdale: the woman I knew well; her name was — J —, and she was exactly such a person as I describe. The ruins of the old chapel, among which the man was found lying, may yet be traced, and stood upon the ridge that divides Paterdale from Boardale and Martindale, having been placed there for the convenience of both districts. The glorious appearance disclosed above and among the mountains was described partly from what my friend Mr. Luff, who then lived in Paterdale, witnessed upon that melancholy occasion, and partly from what Mrs. Wordsworth and I had seen in company with Sir George and Lady Beaumont above Hartshope Hall on our way from Paterdale to Ambleside.

And now for a few words upon the Church, its Monuments, and the Deceased who are spoken of as lying in the surrounding churchyard. But first for the one picture, given by the Pastor and the Wanderer, of the Living. In this nothing is introduced but what was taken from nature and real life. The cottage is called Hackett, and stands as described on the southern extremity of the ridge which separates the two Langdales: the pair who inhabited it were called Jonathan and Betty Yewdale. Once when our children were ill, of whooping-cough I think, we took them for change of air to this cottage, and were in the habit of going there to drink tea upon fine summer afternoons, so that we became intimately

acquainted with the characters, habits, and lives of these good, and, let me say, in the main, wise people. The matron had, in her early youth, been a servant in a house at Hawkshead, where several boys boarded, while I was a schoolboy there. I did not remember her as having served in that capacity; but we had many little anecdotes to tell to each other of remarkable boys, incidents and adventures which had made a noise in their day in that small town. These two persons afterwards settled at Rydal, where they both died.

The church, as already noticed, is that of Grasmere. The interior of it has been improved lately—made warmer by under-drawing the roof and raising the floor—but the rude and antique majesty of its former appearance has been impaired by painting the rafters; and the oak benches, with a simple rail at the back dividing them from each other, have given way to seats that have more the appearance of pews. It is remarkable that, excepting only the pew belonging to Rydal Hall, that to Rydal Mount, the one to the Parsonage, and I believe another, the men and women still continue, as used to be the custom in Wales, to sit separate from each other. Is this practice as old as the Reformation? and when and how did it originate? In the Jewish synagogues and in Lady Huntingdon's chapels the sexes are divided in the same way. In the adjoining churchyard greater changes have taken place. It is now not a little crowded with tombstones; and near the school-house which stands in the churchyard is an ugly structure, built to receive the hearse, which is recently come into use. It would not be worth while to allude to this building or the hearse-vehicle it contains, but that the latter has been the means of introducing a change much to be lamented in the mode of conducting funerals among the mountains. Now, the coffin is lodged in the hearse at the door of the house of the deceased, and the corpse is so conveyed to the churchyard gate: all the solemnity which formerly attended its progress, as described in the poem, is put an end to. So much do I regret this, that I beg to be excused for giving utterance here to a wish that, should it befall me to die at Rydal Mount, my own body may be carried to Grasmere church after the manner in which, till lately, that of every one was borne to that place of sepulture, namely, on the shoulders of neighbours, no house being passed without some words of a funeral psalm being sung at the time by the attendants. When I put into the mouth of the Wanderer, "Many precious rites and customs of our rural ancestry are gone or stealing from us; this I hope will last for ever," and what follows, little did I foresee that the observance and mode of proceeding, which

had often affected me so much, would so soon be superseded. Having said much of the injury done to this churchyard, let me add that one is at liberty to look forward to a time when, by the growth of the yew-trees, thriving there, a solemnity will be spread over the place that will in some degree make amends for the old simple character which has already been so much encroached upon, and will be still more every year. I will here set down, more at length, what has been mentioned in a previous note, that my friend Sir George Beaumont, having long ago purchased the beautiful piece of water called Loughrigg Tarn, on the Banks of which he intended to build, I told him that a person in Kendal who was attached to the place wished to purchase it. Sir George, finding the possession of no use to him, consented to part with it, and placed the purchase-money—twenty pounds—at my disposal for any local use which I thought proper. Accordingly I resolved to plant yew-trees in the churchyard, and had four pretty strong large oak enclosures made, in each of which was planted, under my own eye, and principally if not entirely by my own hand, two young trees, with the intention of leaving the one that throve best to stand. Many years after, Mr. Barber, who will long be remembered in Grasmere; Mr. Greenwood, the chief landed proprietor; and myself, had four other enclosures made in the churchyard at our own expense, in each of which was planted a tree taken from its neighbour, and they all stand thriving admirably, the fences having been removed as no longer necessary. May the trees be taken care of hereafter when we are all gone, and some of them will perhaps at some far distant time rival in majesty the yew of Lorton and those which I have described as growing in Borrowdale, where they are still to be seen in grand assemblage.

And now for the persons that are selected as lying in the churchyard. But first for the individual whose grave is prepared to receive him. His story is here truly related: he was a school-fellow of mine for some years. He came to us when he was at least seventeen years of age, very tall, robust, and full-grown. This prevented him from falling into the amusements and games of the school: consequently he gave more time to books. He was not remarkably bright or quick, but by industry he made a progress more than respectable. His parents not being wealthy enough to send him to college, when he left Hawkshead he became a schoolmaster, with a view to prepare himself for holy orders. About this time he fell in love as related in the poem, and everything followed as there described, except that I do not know when and where he died. The number of youths that came to Hawkshead

school, from the families of the humble yeomanry, to be educated to a certain degree of scholarship as a preparation for the church, was considerable, and the fortunes of these persons in after life various of course, and of some not a little remarkable. I have now one of this class in my eye who became an usher in a preparatory school and ended in making a large fortune. His manners when he came to Hawkshead were as uncouth as well could be; but he had good abilities, with skill to turn them to account; and when the master of the school, to which he was usher, died, he stepped into his place and became proprietor of the establishment. He contrived to manage it with such address, and so much to the taste of what is called high society and the fashionable world, that no school of the kind, even till he retired, was in such high request. Ministers of state, the wealthiest gentry, and nobility of the first rank, vied with each other in bespeaking a place for their sons in the seminary of this fortunate teacher. In the solitude of Grasmere, while living as a married man in a cottage of eight pounds per annum rent, I often used to smile at the tales which reached me of his brilliant career. Not two hundred yards from the cottage in Grasmere, just mentioned, to which I retired, this gentleman, who many years afterwards purchased a small estate in the neighbourhood, is now erecting a boat-house, with an upper story, to be resorted to as an entertaining-room when he and his associates may feel inclined to take their pastime on the lake. Every passenger will be disgusted with the sight of this edifice, not merely as a tasteless thing in itself, but as utterly out of place, and peculiarly fitted, as far as it is observed (and it obtrudes itself on notice at every point of view), to mar the beauty and destroy the pastoral simplicity of the vale. For my own part and that of my household it is our utter detestation, standing by a shore to which, before the highroad was made to pass that way, we used daily and hourly to repair for seclusion and for the shelter of a grove under which I composed many of my poems, the "Brothers" especially, and for this reason we gave the grove that name.

"That which each man loved  
And prized in his peculiar nook of earth  
Dies with him, or is changed."

So much for my old school-fellow and his exploits. I will only add that the foundation has twice failed, from the lake no doubt being intolerant of the intrusion.

The Miner, next described as having found his treasure after twice ten years of labour, lived in Paterdale, and the story is true to the letter. It seems to me, however, rather remarkable that



the strength of mind which had supported him through this long unrewarded labour did not enable him to bear its successful issue. Several times in the course of my life I have heard of sudden influxes of great wealth being followed by derangement, and in one instance the shock of good fortune was so great as to produce absolute idiocy: but these all happened where there had been little or no previous effort to acquire the riches, and therefore such a consequence might the more naturally be expected than in the case of the solitary Miner. In reviewing his story, one cannot but regret that such perseverance was not sustained by a worthier object. Archimedes leapt out of his bath and ran about the streets proclaiming his discovery in a transport of joy, but we are not told that he lost either his life or his senses in consequence. The next character, to whom the Priest is led by contrast with the resoluteness displayed by the foregoing, is taken from a person born and bred in Grasmere, by name Dawson; and whose talents, disposition, and way of life were such as are here delineated. I did not know him, but all was fresh in memory when we settled at Grasmere in the beginning of the century. From this point, the conversation leads to the mention of two individuals who, by their several fortunes, were, at different times, driven to take refuge at the small and obscure town of Hawkshead on the skirt of these mountains. Their stories I had from the dear old dame with whom, as a schoolboy and afterwards, I lodged for nearly the space of ten years. The elder, the Jacobite, was named Drummond, and was of a high family in Scotland: the Hanoverian Whig bore the name of Vandeput, and might perhaps be a descendant of some Dutchman who had come over in the train of King William. At all events his zeal was such that he ruined himself by a contest for the representation of London or Westminster, undertaken to support his party; and retired to this corner of the world, selected, as it had been by Drummond, for that obscurity which, since visiting the Lakes became fashionable, it has no longer retained. So much was this region considered out of the way till a late period, that persons who had fled from justice used often to resort hither for concealment; and some were so bold as to, not unfrequently, make excursions from the place of their retreat, for the purpose of committing fresh offences. Such was particularly the case with two brothers of the name of Weston who took up their abode at Old Brathay, I think about seventy years ago. They were highwaymen, and lived there some time without being discovered, though it was known that they often disappeared in a way and upon errands which could not be accounted for. Their horses were noticed as being of a choice breed, and

I have heard from the Relf family, one of whom was a saddler in the town of Kendal, that they were curious in their saddles and housings and accoutrements of their horses. They, as I have heard, and as was universally believed, were in the end both taken and hanged.

"Tall was her stature; her complexion dark  
And saturnine."

This person lived at Town-end, and was almost our next neighbour. I have little to notice concerning her beyond what is said in the poem. She was a most striking instance how far a woman may surpass in talent, in knowledge, and culture of mind, those with and among whom she lives, and yet fall below them in Christian virtues of the heart and spirit. It seemed almost, and I say it with grief, that in proportion as she excelled in the one, she failed in the other. How frequently has one to observe in both sexes the same thing, and how mortifying is the reflection!

"As, on a sunny bank, a tender lamb  
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of March."

The story that follows was told to Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister by the sister of this unhappy young woman; and every particular was exactly as I have related. The party was not known to me, though she lived at Hawkshead, but it was after I left school. The clergyman, who administered comfort to her in her distress, I knew well. Her sister who told the story was the wife of a leading yeoman in the vale of Grasmere, and they were an affectionate pair and greatly respected by every one who knew them. Neither lived to be old; and their estate—which was perhaps the most considerable then in the vale, and was endeared to them by many remembrances of a salutary character not easily understood, or sympathised with, by those who are born to great affluence—passed to their eldest son, according to the practice of these vales, who died soon after he came into possession. He was an amiable and promising youth, but was succeeded by an only brother, a good-natured man, who fell into habits of drinking, by which he gradually reduced his property; and the other day the last acre of it was sold, and his wife and children and he himself, still surviving, have very little left to live upon, which it would not perhaps have been worth while to record here but that, through all trials, this woman has proved a model of patience, meekness, affectionate forbearance, and forgiveness. Their eldest son, who, through the vices of his father, has thus been robbed of an ancient family inheritance, was never heard to murmur or complain against the cause of their distress, and is now (1843) deservedly the chief prop of his mother's hopes.

The clergyman and his family described at the beginning of the seventh book were, during many years, our principal associates in the vale of Grasmere, unless I were to except our very nearest neighbours. I have entered so particularly into the main points of their history, that I will barely testify in prose that—with the single exception of the particulars of their journey to Grasmere, which, however, was exactly copied from in another instance—the whole that I have said of them is as faithful to the truth as words can make it. There was much talent in the family: the eldest son was distinguished for poetical talent, of which a specimen is given in my notes to the sonnets to the Duddon. Once, when in our cottage at Town-end I was talking with him about poetry, in the course of conversation I presumed to find fault with the versification of Pope, of whom he was an enthusiastic admirer: he defended him with a warmth that indicated much irritation: nevertheless I would not abandon my point, and said, "In compass and variety of sound your own versification surpasses his." Never shall I forget the change in his countenance and tone of voice: the storm was laid in a moment; he no longer disputed my judgment, and I passed immediately in his mind, no doubt, for as great a critic as ever lived. I ought to add, he was a clergyman and a well-educated man, and his verbal memory was the most remarkable of any individual I have known, except a Mr. Archer, an Irishman, who lived several years in this neighbourhood, and who, in this faculty, was a prodigy; he afterwards became deranged, and I fear continues so, if alive. Then follows the character of Robert Walker, for which see notes to the Duddon. Then that of the deaf man, whose epitaph may be seen in the churchyard at the head of Haweswater, and whose qualities of mind and heart, and their benign influence in conjunction with his privation, I had from his relatives on the spot. The blind man, next commemorated, was John Gough, of Kendal, a man known, far beyond his neighbourhood, for his talents and attainments in natural history and science. Of the Infant's grave, next noticed, I will only say, it is an exact picture of what fell under my own observation; and all persons who are intimately acquainted with cottage life must often have observed like instances of the working of the domestic affections.

"A volley thrice repeated o'er the corse  
Let down into the hollow of that grave."

This young volunteer bore the name of Dawson, and was younger brother, if I am not mistaken, to the prodigal of whose character and fortunes an account is given towards the beginning of the

preceding book. The father of the family I knew well; he was a man of literary education and of experience in society much beyond what was common among the inhabitants of the vale. He had lived a good while in the Highlands of Scotland, as a manager of iron-works at Bunaw, and had acted as clerk to one of my predecessors in the office of Distributor of Stamps, when he used to travel round the country collecting and bringing home the money due to Government, in gold, which, it may be worth while to mention for the sake of my friends, was deposited in the cell or iron closet under the west window of the long room at Rydal Mount, which still exists with the iron doors that guarded the property. This of course was before the time of Bills and Notes. The two sons of this person had no doubt been led by the knowledge of their father to take more delight in scholarship, and had been accustomed in their own minds to take a wider view of social interests than was usual among their associates. The premature death of this gallant young man was much lamented, and, as an attendant at the funeral, I myself witnessed the ceremony and the effect of it as described in the poem.

"Tradition tells

That, in Eliza's golden days, a Knight  
Came on a war-horse."

"The house is gone."

The pillars of the gateway in front of the mansion remained when we first took up our abode at Grasmere. Two or three cottages still remain, which are called Knott-houses from the name of the gentleman (I have called him a knight) concerning whom these traditions survive. He was the ancestor of the Knott family, formerly considerable proprietors in the district. What follows in the discourse of the Wanderer upon the changes he had witnessed in rural life, by the introduction of machinery, is truly described from what I myself saw during my boyhood and early youth, and from what was often told me by persons of this humble calling. Happily, most happily, for these mountains, the mischief was diverted from the banks of their beautiful streams, and transferred to open and flat countries abounding in coal, where the agency of steam was found much more effectual for carrying on those demoralising works. Had it not been for this invention, long before the present time every torrent and river in this district would have had its factory, large and populous in proportion to the power of the water that could there have been commanded. Parliament has interfered to prevent the night-work which was once carried on in these mills as actively as during the daytime, and by necessity still more perniciously—a sad dis-

grace to the proprietors, and to the nation which could so long tolerate such unnatural proceedings. Reviewing at this late period, 1843, what I put into the mouths of my interlocutors a few years after the commencement of the century, I grieve that so little progress has been made in diminishing the evils deplored, or promoting the benefits of education which the Wanderer anticipates. The results of Lord Ashley's labours to defer the time when children might legally be allowed to work in factories, and his endeavours to limit still farther the hours of permitted labour, have fallen far short of his own humane wishes, and those of every benevolent and right-minded man who has carefully attended to this subject: and in the present session of Parliament (1843) Sir James Graham's attempt to establish a course of religious education among the children employed in factories has been abandoned, in consequence of what might easily have been foreseen, the vehement and turbulent opposition of the Dissenters: so that, for many years to come, it may be thought expedient to leave the religious instruction of children entirely in the hands of the several denominations of Christians in the island, each body to work according to its own means and in its own way. Such is my own confidence, a confidence I share with many others of my most valued friends, in the superior advantages, both religious and social, which attend a course of instruction presided over and guided by the clergy of the Church of England, that I have no doubt that, if but once its members, lay and clerical, were duly sensible of those benefits, their church would daily gain ground, and rapidly, upon every shape and fashion of Dissent: and in that case, a great majority in Parliament being sensible of these benefits, the Ministers of the country might be emboldened, were it necessary, to apply funds of the State to the support of education on Church principles. Before I conclude, I cannot forbear noticing the strenuous efforts made at this time in Parliament, by so many persons, to extend manufacturing and commercial industry at the expense of agricultural, though we have recently had abundant proofs that the apprehensions expressed by the Wanderer were not groundless.

"I spake of mischief by the wise diffused  
With gladness, thinking that the more it spreads  
The healthier, the securer, we become—  
Delusion which a moment may destroy!"

The Chartists are well aware of this possibility, and cling to it with an ardour and perseverance which nothing but wiser and more brotherly dealing towards the many, on the part of the wealthy few, can moderate or remove.

"While, from the grassy mountain's open side,  
We gazed, in silence hushed."

The point here fixed upon in my imagination is half-way up the northern side of Loughrigg Fell, from which the Pastor and his companions were supposed to look upwards to the sky and mountain-tops, and round the vale, with the lake lying immediately beneath them.

"But turned not without welcome promise made,  
That he would share the pleasures and pursuits  
Of yet another summer's day, consumed  
In wandering with us."

When I reported this promise of the Solitary, and long after, it was my wish, and I might say intention, that we should resume our wanderings, and pass the Borders into his native country, where, as I hoped, he might witness, in the society of the Wanderer, some religious ceremony—a sacrament, say, in the open fields, or a preaching among the mountains—which, by recalling to his mind the days of his early childhood, when he had been present on such occasions in company with his parents and nearest kindred, might have dissolved his heart into tenderness, and so have done more towards restoring the Christian faith in which he had been educated, and, with that, contentedness and even cheerfulness of mind, than all that the Wanderer and Pastor, by their several effusions and addresses, had been able to effect. An issue like this was in my intentions. But, alas!

"Mid the wreck of is and was,  
Things incomplete and purposes betrayed  
Make sadder transits o'er thought's optic glass  
Than noblest objects utterly decayed!"

TO THE RIGHT HON.

WILLIAM, EARL OF LONSDALE, K.G.  
ETC. ETC.

OFT, through thy fair domains, illustrious Peer!  
In youth I roamed, on youthful pleasures bent;  
And mused in rocky cell or sylvan tent,  
Beside swift-flowing Lowther's current clear  
—Now, by thy care befriended, I appear  
Before thee, LONSDALE, and this Work present,  
A token (may it prove a monument!)  
Of high respect and gratitude sincere.  
Gladly would I have waited till my task  
Had reached its close; but Life is insecure,  
And Hope full oft fallacious as a dream:  
Therefore, for what is here produced, I ask  
Thy favour; trusting that thou wilt not deem  
The offering, though imperfect, premature.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,  
July 29, 1814.

## PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF

1814

THE Title-page announces that this is only a portion of a poem; and the Reader must be here apprised that it belongs to the second part of a long and laborious Work, which is to consist of three parts.—The Author will candidly acknowledge that, if the first of these had been completed, and in such a manner as to satisfy his own mind, he should have preferred the natural order of publication, and have given that to the world first; but, as the second division of the Work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem; and as this part does not depend upon the preceding to a degree which will materially injure its own peculiar interest, the Author, complying with the earnest entreaties of some valued Friends, presents the following pages to the Public.

It may be proper to state whence the poem, of which "The Excursion" is a part, derives its Title of THE RECLUSE.—Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary Work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them. That Work,<sup>1</sup> addressed to a dear Friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's Intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society; and to be entitled, "The Recluse"; as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.—The preparatory poem<sup>1</sup> is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two Works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the ante-chapel has to the body of a Gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor Pieces, which have been

long before the Public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive Reader to have such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.

The Author would not have deemed himself justified in saying, upon this occasion, so much of performances either unfinished or unpublished, if he had not thought that the labour bestowed by him upon what he has heretofore and now laid before the Public entitled him to candid attention for such a statement as he thinks necessary to throw light upon his endeavours to please and, he would hope, to benefit his countrymen.—Nothing further need be added, than that the first and third parts of "The Recluse" will consist chiefly of meditations in the Author's own person; and that in the intermediate part ("The Excursion") the intervention of characters speaking is employed, and something of a dramatic form adopted.

It is not the Author's intention formally to announce a system; it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course; and if he shall succeed in conveying to the mind clear thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings, the Reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself. And in the meantime the following passage, taken from the conclusion of the first book of "The Recluse," may be acceptable as a kind of *Prospectus* of the design and scope of the whole Poem.

[The passage referred to begins with the line, "On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life," see page 343 of the present edition, and ends with, "Guide, and support, and cheer me to the end!" page 345.]

## BOOK FIRST

## THE WANDERER

## ARGUMENT

A summer forenoon—The Author reaches a ruined Cottage upon a Common, and there meets with a revered Friend, the Wanderer, of whose education and course of life he gives an account—The Wanderer, while resting under the shade of the Trees that surround the Cottage, relates the History of its last Inhabitant.

'Twas summer, and the sun had mounted high:

Southward the landscape indistinctly glared  
Through a pale steam; but all the north-  
ern downs,

<sup>1</sup> The Prelude.

In clearest air ascending, showed far off  
A surface dappled o'er with shadows flung  
From brooding clouds ; shadows that lay  
in spots

Determined and unmoved, with steady  
beams

Of bright and pleasant sunshine interposed ;  
To him most pleasant who on soft cool  
moss

Extends his careless limbs along the front  
Of some huge cave, whose rocky ceiling  
casts

A twilight of its own, an ample shade,  
Where the wren warbles, while the dream-  
ing man,

Half conscious of the soothing melody,  
With side-long eye looks out upon the  
scene,

By power of that impending covert, thrown  
To finer distance. Mine was at that hour  
Far other lot, yet with good hope that soon  
Under a shade as grateful I should find  
Rest, and be welcomed there to livelier joy.  
Across a bare wide Common I was toiling  
With languid steps that by the slippery turf  
Were baffled ; nor could my weak arm  
disperse

The host of insects gathering round my face,  
And ever with me as I paced along.

Upon that open moorland stood a grove,  
The wished-for port to which my course  
was bound.

Thither I came, and there, amid the gloom  
Spread by a brotherhood of lofty elms,  
Appeared a roofless Hut ; four naked walls  
That stared upon each other !—I looked  
round,

And to my wish and to my hope espied  
The Friend I sought ; a Man of reverend  
age,

But stout and hale, for travel unimpaired.  
There was he seen upon the cottage-bench,  
Recurrent in the shade, as if asleep ;  
An iron-pointed staff lay at his side.

Him had I marked the day before—alone  
And stationed in the public way, with face  
Turned toward the sun then setting, while  
that staff

Afforded, to the figure of the man  
Detained for contemplation or repose,  
Graceful support ; his countenance as he  
stood

Was hidden from my view, and he remained  
Unrecognised ; but, stricken by the sight,  
With slackened footsteps I advanced, and  
soon

A glad congratulation we exchanged  
At such unthought-of meeting.—For the  
night

We parted, nothing willingly ; and now  
He by appointment waited for me here,  
Under the covert of these clustering elms.

We were tried Friends : amid a pleasant  
vale,

In the antique market-village where was  
passed

My school-time, an apartment he had  
owned,

To which at intervals the Wanderer drew,  
And found a kind of home or harbour  
there.

He loved me ; from a swarm of rosy boys  
Singled out me, as he in sport would say,  
For my grave looks, too thoughtful for my  
years.

As I grew up, it was my best delight  
To be his chosen comrade. Many a time,  
On holidays, we rambled through the  
woods :

We sate—we walked ; he pleased me with  
report

Of things which he had seen ; and often  
touched

Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the mind  
Turned inward ; or at my request would  
sing

Old songs, the product of his native hills ;  
A skilful distribution of sweet sounds,  
Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed  
As cool refreshing water, by the care  
Of the industrious husbandman, diffused  
Through a parched meadow-ground, in  
time of drought.

Still deeper welcome found his pure dis-  
course ;

How precious, when in riper days I learned  
To weigh with care his words, and to  
rejoice

In the plain presence of his dignity !

Oh ! many are the Poets that are sown  
By Nature ; men endowed with highest  
gifts,

The vision and the faculty divine ;  
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,

(Which, in the docile season of their youth,  
It was denied them to acquire, through  
lack

Of culture and the inspiring aid of books,  
Or haply by a temper too severe,  
Or a nice backwardness afraid of shame)  
Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been led  
By circumstance to take unto the height  
The measure of themselves, these favoured  
Beings,

All but a scattered few, live out their time,  
Husbanding that which they possess within,  
And go to the grave, unthought of. Strong-  
est minds

Are often those of whom the noisy world  
Hears least ; else surely this Man had not  
left

His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed.  
But, as the mind was filled with inward  
light,

So not without distinction had he lived,  
Beloved and honoured—far as he was  
known.

And some small portion of his eloquent  
speech,

And something that may serve to set in view  
The feeling pleasures of his loneliness,  
His observations, and the thoughts his  
mind

Had dealt with—I will here record in verse ;  
Which, if with truth it correspond, and sink  
Or rise as venerable Nature leads,  
The high and tender Muses shall accept  
With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,  
And listening Time reward with sacred  
praise.

Among the hills of Athol he was born ;  
Where, on a small hereditary farm,  
An unproductive slip of rugged ground,  
His Parents, with their numerous offspring,  
dwelt ;

A virtuous household, though exceeding  
poor !

Pure livers were they all, austere and grave,  
And fearing God ; the very children taught  
Stern self-respect, a reverence for God's  
word,

And an habitual piety, maintained  
With strictness scarcely known on English  
ground.

From his sixth year, the Boy of whom I  
speak,

In summer, tended cattle on the hills ;  
But, through the inclement and the perilous  
days

Of long-continuing winter, he repaired,  
Equipped with satchel, to a school, that  
stood

Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge,  
Remote from view of city spire, or sound  
Of minster clock ! From that bleak tene-  
ment

He, many an evening, to his distant home  
In solitude returning, saw the hills  
Grow larger in the darkness ; all alone  
Beheld the stars come out above his head,  
And travelled through the wood, with no  
one near

To whom he might confess the things he  
saw.

So the foundations of his mind were laid.  
In such communion, not from terror free,  
While yet a child, and long before his time,  
Had he perceived the presence and the  
power

Of greatness ; and deep feelings had im-  
pressed

So vividly great objects that they lay  
Upon his mind like substances, whose  
presence

Perplexed the bodily sense. He had re-  
ceived

A precious gift ; for, as he grew in years,  
With these impressions would he still  
compare

All his remembrances, thoughts, shapes,  
and forms ;

And, being still unsatisfied with aught  
Of dimmer character, he thence attained  
An active power to fasten images  
Upon his brain ; and on their pictured lines  
Intensely brooded, even till they acquired  
The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail,  
While yet a child, with a child's eagerness  
Incessantly to turn his ear and eye  
On all things which the moving seasons  
brought

To feed such appetite—nor this alone  
Appeased his yearning :—in the after-day  
Of boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn,  
And 'mid the hollow depths of naked crags  
He sate, and even in their fixed lineaments,  
Or from the power of a peculiar eye,  
Or by creative feeling overborne,  
Or by predominance of thought oppressed,

Even in their fixed and steady lineaments  
He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind,  
Expression ever varying !

Thus informed,  
He had small need of books ; for many a  
tale

Traditionary, round the mountains hung,  
And many a legend, peopling the dark  
woods,

Nourished Imagination in her growth,  
And gave the Mind that apprehensive  
power

By which she is made quick to recognise  
The moral properties and scope of things.  
But eagerly he read, and read again,  
Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied ;  
The life and death of martyrs, who sus-  
tained,

With will inflexible, those fearful pangs  
Triumphantly displayed in records left  
Of persecution, and the Covenant—times  
Whose echo rings through Scotland to this  
hour !

And there, by lucky hap, had been preserved  
A straggling volume, torn and incomplete,  
That left half-told the preternatural tale,  
Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends,  
Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts  
Strange and uncouth ; dire faces, figures  
dire,

Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbowed, and lean-  
ankled too,

With long and ghostly shanks—forms which  
once seen

Could never be forgotten !

In his heart,  
Where Fear sate thus, a cherished visitant,  
Was wanting yet the pure delight of love  
By sound diffused, or by the breathing air,  
Or by the silent looks of happy things,  
Or flowing from the universal face  
Of earth and sky. But he had felt the  
power

Of Nature, and already was prepared,  
By his intense conceptions, to receive  
Deeply the lesson deep of love which he,  
Whom Nature, by whatever means, has  
taught

To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

Such was the Boy—but for the growing  
Youth

What soul was his, when, from the naked  
top

Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun  
Rise up, and bathe the world in light ! He  
looked—

Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth  
And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay  
Beneath him :—Far and wide the clouds  
were touched,

And in their silent faces could he read  
Unutterable love. Sound needed none,  
Nor any voice of joy ; his spirit drank  
The spectacle : sensation, soul, and form,  
All melted into him ; they swallowed up  
His animal being ; in them did he live,  
And by them did he live ; they were his life.  
In such access of mind, in such high hour  
Of visitation from the living God,  
Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.  
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no  
request ;

Rapt into still communion that transcends  
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power  
That made him ; it was blessedness and  
love !

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain  
tops,

Such intercourse was his, and in this sort  
Was his existence oftentimes *possessed*.  
O then how beautiful, how bright, appeared  
The written promise ! Early had he learned  
To reverence the volume that displays  
The mystery, the life which cannot die ;  
But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.  
All things, responsive to the writing, there  
Breathed immortality, revolving life,  
And greatness still revolving ; infinite :  
There littleness was not ; the least of things  
Seemed infinite ; and there his spirit shaped  
Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he *saw*.  
What wonder if his being thus became  
Sublime and comprehensive ! Low desires,  
Low thoughts had there no place ; yet was  
his heart

Lowly ; for he was meek in gratitude,  
Oft as he called those ecstasies to mind,  
And whence they flowed ; and from them  
he acquired

Wisdom, which works through patience ;  
thence he learned

In oft-recurring hours of sober thought  
To look on Nature with a humble heart.  
Self-questioned where it did not understand.  
And with a superstitious eye of love.

So passed the time; yet to the nearest town

He duly went with what small overplus  
His earnings might supply, and brought away

The book that most had tempted his desires  
While at the stall he read. Among the hills  
He gazed upon that mighty orb of song,  
The divine Milton. Lore of different kind,  
The annual savings of a toilsome life,  
His Schoolmaster supplied; books that explain

The purer elements of truth involved  
In lines and numbers, and, by charm severe,  
(Especially perceived where nature droops  
And feeling is suppressed) preserve the mind  
Busy in solitude and poverty.

These occupations oftentimes deceived  
The listless hours, while in the hollow vale,  
Hollow and green, he lay on the green turf  
In pensive idleness. What could he do,  
Thus daily thirsting, in that lonesome life,  
With blind endeavours? Yet, still upper-

most,  
Nature was at his heart as if he felt,  
Though yet he knew not how, a wasting power

In all things that from her sweet influence  
Might tend to wean him. Therefore with her hues,

Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,  
He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.  
While yet he lingered in the rudiments  
Of science, and among her simplest laws,  
His triangles—they were the stars of heaven,  
The silent stars! Oft did he take delight  
To measure the altitude of some tall crag  
That is the eagle's birth-place, or some peak  
Familiar with forgotten years, that shows,  
Inscribed upon its visionary sides,  
The history of many a winter storm,  
Or obscure records of the path of fire.

And thus before his eighteenth year was told,

Accumulated feelings pressed his heart  
With still increasing weight; he was o'er-powered

By Nature; by the turbulence subdued  
Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,  
And the first virgin passion of a soul  
Communing with the glorious universe.  
Full often wished he that the winds might rage

When they were silent: far more fondly now  
Than in his earlier season did he love  
Tempestuous nights—the conflict and the sounds

That live in darkness. From his intellect  
And from the stillness of abstracted thought  
He asked repose; and, failing oft to win  
The peace required, he scanned the laws of light

Amid the roar of torrents, where they send  
From hollow clefts up to the clearer air  
A cloud of mist that, smitten by the sun,  
Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,  
And vainly by all other means, he strove  
To mitigate the fever of his heart.

In dreams, in study, and in ardent thought,

Thus was he reared; much wanting to assist  
The growth of intellect, yet gaining more,  
And every moral feeling of his soul  
Strengthened and braced, by breathing in content

The keen, the wholesome, air of poverty,  
And drinking from the well of homely life.  
—But, from past liberty, and tried restraints,  
He now was summoned to select the course  
Of humble industry that promised best  
To yield him no unworthy maintenance.  
Urged by his Mother, he essayed to teach  
A village-school—but wandering thoughts were then

A misery to him; and the Youth resigned  
A task he was unable to perform.

That stern yet kindly Spirit, who constrains

The Savoyard to quit his naked rocks,  
The free-born Swiss to leave his narrow vales,

(Spirit attached to regions mountainous  
Like their own steadfast clouds) did now impel

His restless mind to look abroad with hope.  
—An irksome drudgery seems it to plod on,  
Through hot and dusty ways, or pelting storm,

A vagrant Merchant under a heavy load,  
Bent as he moves, and needing frequent rest;

Yet do such travellers find their own delight;

And their hard service, deemed debasing now



Gained merited respect in simpler times ;  
When squire, and priest, and they who  
round them dwelt

In rustic sequestration—all dependent  
Upon the PEDLAR'S toil—supplied their  
wants,

Or pleased their fancies, with the wares he  
brought.

Not ignorant was the Youth that still no  
few

Of his adventurous countrymen were led  
By perseverance in this track of life  
To competence and ease :—to him it offered

Attractions manifold ;—and this he chose.  
—His Parents on the enterprise bestowed  
Their farewell benediction, but with hearts  
Foreboding evil. From his native hills  
He wandered far ; much did he see of men,<sup>1</sup>  
Their manners, their enjoyments, and  
pursuits,

Their passions and their feelings ; chiefly  
those

Essential and eternal in the heart,  
That, 'mid the simpler forms of rural life,  
Exist more simple in their elements,  
And speak a plainer language. In the  
woods,

A lone Enthusiast, and among the fields,  
Itinerant in this labour, he had passed  
The better portion of his time ; and there  
Spontaneously had his affections thriven  
Amid the bounties of the year, the peace  
And liberty of nature ; there he kept  
In solitude and solitary thought  
His mind in a just equipoise of love,  
Serene it was, unclouded by the cares  
Of ordinary life ; unvexed, unwarped  
By partial bondage. In his steady course,  
No piteous revolutions had he felt,  
No wild varieties of joy and grief.  
Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,  
His heart lay open ; and, by nature tuned  
And constant disposition of his thoughts  
To sympathy with man, he was alive  
To all that was enjoyed where'er he went,  
And all that was endured ; for, in himself  
Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,  
He had no painful pressure from without  
That made him turn aside from wretchedness  
With coward fears. He could afford to  
suffer

With those whom he saw suffer. Hence it  
came

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

That in our best experience he was rich,  
And in the wisdom of our daily life.  
For hence, minutely, in his various rounds,  
He had observed the progress and decay  
Of many minds, of minds and bodies too ;  
The history of many families ;  
How they had prospered ; how they were  
o'erthrown

By passion or mischance, or such misrule  
Among the unthinking masters of the earth  
As makes the nations groan.

This active course  
He followed till provision for his wants  
Had been obtained ;—the Wanderer then  
resolved

To pass the remnant of his days, untasked  
With needless services, from hardship free.  
His calling laid aside, he lived at ease :  
But still he loved to pace the public roads  
And the wild paths ; and, by the summer's  
warmth

Invited, often would he leave his home  
And journey far, revisiting the scenes  
That to his memory were most endeared.  
—Vigorous in health, of hopeful spirits,  
undamped

By worldly-mindedness or anxious care ;  
Observant, studious, thoughtful, and re-  
freshed

By knowledge gathered up from day to day ;  
Thus had he lived a long and innocent life.

The Scottish Church, both on himself and  
those

With whom from childhood he grew up,  
had held

The strong hand of her purity ; and still  
Had watched him with an unrelenting eye.  
This he remembered in his riper age  
With gratitude, and reverential thoughts.  
But by the native vigour of his mind,  
By his habitual wanderings out of doors,  
By loneliness, and goodness, and kind  
works,

Whate'er, in docile childhood or in youth,  
He had imbibed of fear or darker thought  
Was melted all away ; so true was this,  
That sometimes his religion seemed to me  
Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods ;  
Who to the model of his own pure heart  
Shaped his belief, as grace divine inspired,  
And human reason dictated with awe.  
—And surely never did there live on earth  
A man of kindlier nature. The rough sports

And teasing ways of children vexed not him ;  
Indulgent listener was he to the tongue  
Of garrulous age ; nor did the sick man's  
tale,

To his fraternal sympathy addressed,  
Obtain reluctant hearing.

Plain his garb ;  
Such as might suit a rustic Sire, prepared  
For sabbath duties ; yet he was a man  
Whom no one could have passed without  
remark.

Active and nervous was his gait ; his limbs  
And his whole figure breathed intelligence.  
Time had compressed the freshness of his  
cheek

Into a narrower circle of deep red,  
But had not tamed his eye ; that, under  
brows

Shaggy and grey, had meanings which it  
brought

From years of youth ; which, like a Being  
made

Of many Beings, he had wondrous skill  
To blend with knowledge of the years to  
come,

Human, or such as lie beyond the grave.

So was He framed ; and such his course  
of life

Who now, with no appendage but a staff,  
The prized memorial of relinquished toils,  
Upon that cottage-bench reposed his limbs,  
Screened from the sun. Supine the Wan-  
derer lay,

His eyes as if in drowsiness half shut,  
The shadows of the breezy elms above  
Dappling his face. He had not heard the  
sound

Of my approaching steps, and in the shade  
Unnoticed did I stand some minutes' space.  
At length I hailed him, seeing that his hat  
Was moist with water-drops, as if the brim  
Had newly scooped a running stream. He  
rose,

And ere our lively greeting into peace  
Had settled, "'Tis," said I, "a burning  
day :

My lips are parched with thirst, but you, it  
seems

Have somewhere found relief." He, at the  
word,

Pointing towards a sweet-briar, bade me  
climb

The fence where that aspiring shrub looked  
out

Upon the public way. It was a plot  
Of garden ground run wild, its matted  
weeds

Marked with the steps of those, whom, as  
they passed,

The gooseberry trees that shot in long lank  
slips,

Or currants, hanging from their leafless  
stems,

In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erleap  
The broken wall. I looked around, and  
there,

Where two tall hedge-rows of thick alder  
boughs

Joined in a cold damp nook, espied a well  
Shrouded with willow-flowers and plummy  
fern.

My thirst I slaked, and, from the cheerless  
spot

Withdrawing, straightway to the shade re-  
turned

Where sate the old Man on the cottage-  
bench ;

And, while, beside him, with uncovered  
head,

I yet was standing, freely to respire,  
And cool my temples in the fanning air,  
Thus did he speak. "I see around me  
here

Things which you cannot see : we die, my  
Friend,

Nor we alone, but that which each man  
loved

And prized in his peculiar nook of earth  
Dies with him, or is changed ; and very  
soon

Even of the good is no memorial left.

—The Poets, in their elegies and songs  
Lamenting the departed, call the groves,  
They call upon the hills and streams, to  
mourn,

And senseless rocks ; nor idly ; for they  
speak,

In these their invocations, with a voice  
Obedient to the strong creative power  
Of human passion. Sympathies there are  
More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred birth,  
That steal upon the meditative mind,  
And grow with thought. Beside yon spring  
I stood,

And eyed its waters till we seemed to feel  
One sadness, they and I. For them a bond

Of brotherhood is broken : time has been  
When, every day, the touch of human hand  
Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them  
up

In mortal stillness ; and they ministered  
To human comfort. Stooping down to  
drink,

Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied  
The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,  
Green with the moss of years, and subject  
only

To the soft handling of the elements :  
There let it lie—how foolish are such  
thoughts !

Forgive them ;—never—never did my steps  
Approach this door but she who dwelt  
within

A daughter's welcome gave me, and I loved  
her

As my own child. Oh, Sir ! the good die  
first,

And they whose hearts are dry as summer  
dust

Burn to the socket. Many a passenger  
Hath blessed poor Margaret for her gentle  
looks,

When she upheld the cool refreshment  
drawn

From that forsaken spring ; and no one  
came

But he was welcome ; no one went away  
But that it seemed she loved him. She is  
dead,

The light extinguished of her lonely hut,  
The hut itself abandoned to decay,  
And she forgotten in the quiet grave.

I speak," continued he, "of One whose  
stock

Of virtues bloomed beneath this lonely roof.  
She was a Woman of a steady mind,  
Tender and deep in her excess of love ;  
Not speaking much, pleased rather with the  
joy

Of her own thoughts : by some especial care  
Her temper had been framed, as if to make  
A Being, who by adding love to peace  
Might live on earth a life of happiness.  
Her wedded Partner lacked not on his side  
The humble worth that satisfied her heart :  
Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal  
Keenly industrious. She with pride would  
tell

That he was often seated at his loom,

In summer, ere the mower was abroad  
Among the dewy grass,—in early spring,  
Ere the last star had vanished.—They who  
passed

At evening, from behind the garden fence  
Might hear his busy spade, which he would  
ply.

After his daily work, until the light  
Had failed, and every leaf and flower were  
lost

In the dark hedges. So their days were  
spent

In peace and comfort ; and a pretty boy  
Was their best hope, next to the God in  
heaven.

Not twenty years ago, but you I think  
Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there  
came

Two blighting seasons, when the fields were  
left

With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven to  
add

A worse affliction in the plague of war :  
This happy Land was stricken to the heart !  
A Wanderer then among the cottages,  
I, with my freight of winter raiment, saw  
The hardships of that season : many rich  
Sank down, as in a dream, among the  
poor ;

And of the poor did many cease to be,  
And their place knew them not. Mean-  
while, abridged

Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled  
To numerous self-denials, Margaret  
Went struggling on through those calamitous  
years

With cheerful hope, until the second autumn,  
When her life's Helpmate on a sick-bed lay,  
Smitten with perilous fever. In disease  
He lingered long ; and, when his strength  
returned,

He found the little he had stored, to meet  
The hour of accident or crippling age,  
Was all consumed. A second infant now  
Was added to the troubles of a time  
Laden, for them and all of their degree,  
With care and sorrow ; shoals of artisans  
From ill-requited labour turned adrift  
Sought daily bread from public charity,  
They, and their wives and children—  
happier far

Could they have lived as do the little birds  
That peck along the hedge-rows, or the kite

That makes her dwelling on the mountain  
rocks !

A sad reverse it was for him who long  
Had filled with plenty, and possessed in  
peace,

This lonely Cottage. At the door he stood,  
And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes  
That had no mirth in them; or with his  
knife

Carved uncouth figures on the heads of  
sticks—

Then, not less idly, sought, through every  
nook

In house or garden, any casual work  
Of use or ornament; and with a strange,  
Amusing, yet uneasy, novelty,  
He mingled, where he might, the various  
tasks

Of summer, autumn, winter, and of spring.  
But this endured not; his good humour  
soon

Became a weight in which no pleasure was:  
And poverty brought on a petted mood  
And a sore temper: day by day he drooped,  
And he would leave his work—and to the  
town

Would turn without an errand his slack  
steps;

Or wander here and there among the fields.  
One while he would speak lightly of his  
babes,

And with a cruel tongue: at other times  
He tossed them with a false unnatural joy:  
And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks  
Of the poor innocent children. 'Every  
smile,'

Said Margaret to me, here beneath these  
trees,

'Made my heart bleed.' "

At this the Wanderer paused;  
And, looking up to those enormous elms,  
He said, "'Tis now the hour of deepest  
noon.

At this still season of repose and peace,  
This hour when all things which are not at  
rest

Are cheerful; while this multitude of flies  
With tuneful hum is filling all the air;  
Why should a tear be on an old Man's  
cheek?

Why should we thus, with an untoward  
mind,

And in the weakness of humanity,

From natural wisdom turn our hearts away;  
To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears;  
And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb  
The calm of nature with our restless  
thoughts?"

He spake with somewhat of a solemn tone:  
But, when he ended, there was in his face  
Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild,  
That for a little time it stole away  
All recollection; and that simple tale  
Passed from my mind like a forgotten  
sound.

A while on trivial things we held discourse,  
To me soon tasteless. In my own despite,  
I thought of that poor Woman as of one  
Whom I had known and loved. He had  
rehearsed

Her homely tale with such familiar power,  
With such an active countenance, an eye  
So busy, that the things of which he spake  
Seemed present; and, attention now re-  
laxed,

A heart-felt chillness crept along my veins.  
I rose; and, having left the breezy shade,  
Stood drinking comfort from the warmer  
sun,

That had not cheered me long—ere, look-  
ing round

Upon that tranquil Ruin, I returned,  
And begged of the old Man that, for my  
sake,

He would resume his story.

He replied,  
"It were a wantonness, and would demand  
Severe reproof, if we were men whose  
hearts

Could hold vain dalliance with the misery  
Even of the dead; contented thence to draw  
A momentary pleasure, never marked  
By reason, barren of all future good.

But we have known that there is often  
found

In mournful thoughts, and always might  
be found,

A power to virtue friendly; were't not so,  
I am a dreamer among men, indeed  
An idle dreamer! 'Tis a common tale,  
An ordinary sorrow of man's life,  
A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed  
In bodily form. — But without further  
bidding

I will proceed.

While thus it fared with them,  
To whom this cottage, till those hapless  
years,  
Had been a blessed home, it was my chance  
To travel in a country far remote;  
And when these lofty elms once more ap-  
peared  
What pleasant expectations lured me on  
O'er the flat Common!—With quick step  
I reached

The threshold, lifted with light hand the  
latch;

But, when I entered, Margaret looked at  
me

A little while; then turned her head away  
Speechless,—and, sitting down upon a  
chair,

Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,  
Nor how to speak to her. Poor Wretch!  
at last

She rose from off her seat, and then,—O  
Sir!

I cannot *tell* how she pronounced my  
name:—

With fervent love, and with a face of grief  
Unutterably helpless, and a look  
That seemed to cling upon me, she en-  
quired

If I had seen her husband. As she spake  
A strange surprise and fear came to my  
heart,

Nor had I power to answer ere she told  
That he had disappeared—not two months  
gone.

He left his house: two wretched days had  
past,

And on the third, as wistfully she raised  
Her head from off her pillow, to look forth,  
Like one in trouble, for returning light,  
Within her chamber-casement she espied  
A folded paper, lying as if placed  
To meet her waking eyes. This trem-  
blingly

She opened—found no writing, but beheld  
Pieces of money carefully enclosed,  
Silver and gold. 'I shuddered at the sight,'  
Said Margaret, 'for I knew it was his hand  
That must have placed it there; and ere  
that day

Was ended, that long anxious day, I  
learned,

From one who by my husband had been  
sent

With the sad news, that he had joined a  
troop

Of soldiers, going to a distant land.

—He left me thus—he could not gather  
heart

To take a farewell of me; for he feared  
That I should follow with my babes, and  
sink

Beneath the misery of that wandering life.'

This tale did Margaret tell with many  
tears:

And, when she ended, I had little power  
To give her comfort, and was glad to take  
Such words of hope from her own mouth  
as served

To cheer us both. But long we had not  
talked

Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,  
And with a brighter eye she looked around  
As if she had been shedding tears of joy.

We parted.—'Twas the time of early spring;  
I left her busy with her garden tools;

And well remember, o'er that fence she  
looked,

And, while I paced along the foot-way  
path,

Called out, and sent a blessing after me,  
With tender cheerfulness, and with a voice  
That seemed the very sound of happy  
thoughts.

I roved o'er many a hill and many a  
dale,

With my accustomed load; in heat and  
cold,

Through many a wood and many an open  
ground,

In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair,  
Drooping or blithe of heart, as might befall;  
My best companions now the driving winds,  
And now the 'trotting brooks' and whis-  
pering trees,

And now the music of my own sad steps,  
With many a short-lived thought that  
passed between,

And disappeared.

I journeyed back this way,  
When, in the warmth of midsummer, the  
wheat

Was yellow; and the soft and bladed grass,  
Springing afresh, had o'er the hay-field  
spread

Its tender verdure. At the door arrived,

I found that she was absent. In the shade,  
Where now we sit, I waited her return.  
Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore  
Its customary look,—only, it seemed,  
The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch,  
Hung down in heavier tufts; and that  
bright weed,

The yellow stone-crop, suffered to take root  
Along the window's edge, profusely grew,  
Blinding the lower panes. I turned aside,  
And strolled into her garden. It appeared  
To lag behind the season, and had lost  
Its pride of neatness. Daisy-flowers and  
thrift

Had broken their trim border-lines, and  
straggled

O'er paths they used to deck: carnations,  
once

Prized for surpassing beauty, and no less  
For the peculiar pains they had required,  
Declined their languid heads, wanting  
support.

The cumbrous bind-weed, with its wreaths  
and bells,

Had twined about her two small rows of  
peas,

And dragged them to the earth.

Ere this an hour  
Was wasted.—Back I turned my restless  
steps;

A stranger passed; and, guessing whom I  
sought,

He said that she was used to ramble far.—  
The sun was sinking in the west; and now  
I sate with sad impatience. From within  
Her solitary infant cried aloud;  
Then, like a blast that dies away self-stilled,  
The voice was silent. From the bench I  
rose;

But neither could divert nor soothe my  
thoughts.

The spot, though fair, was very desolate—  
The longer I remained, more desolate:

And, looking round me, now I first observed  
The corner stones, on either side the porch,  
With dull red stains discoloured, and stuck  
o'er

With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the sheep,  
That fed upon the Common, thither came  
Familiarly, and found a couching-place  
Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows  
fell

From these tall elms; the cottage-clock  
struck eight;—

I turned, and saw her distant a few steps.  
Her face was pale and thin—her figure, too,  
Was changed. As she unlocked the door,  
she said,

'It grieves me you have waited here so  
long,

But, in good truth, I've wandered much of  
late;

And sometimes—to my shame I speak—  
have need

Of my best prayers to bring me back again.  
While on the board she spread our evening  
meal,

She told me—interrupting not the work  
Which gave employment to her listless  
hands—

That she had parted with her elder child;  
To a kind master on a distant farm  
Now happily apprenticed.—'I perceive  
You look at me, and you have cause; to-  
day

I have been travelling far; and many days  
About the fields I wander, knowing this  
Only, that what I seek I cannot find;  
And so I waste my time: for I am changed;  
And to myself,' said she, 'have done much  
wrong

And to this helpless infant. I have slept  
Weeping, and weeping have I waked; my  
tears

Have flowed as if my body were not such  
As others are; and I could never die.

But I am now in mind and in my heart  
More easy; and I hope,' said she, 'that  
God

Will give me patience to endure the things  
Which I behold at home.'

It would have grieved  
Your very soul to see her. Sir, I feel  
The story linger in my heart; I fear  
'Tis long and tedious; but my spirit clings  
To that poor Woman:—so familiarly  
Do I perceive her manner, and her look,  
And presence; and so deeply do I feel  
Her goodness, that, not seldom, in my  
walks

A momentary trance comes over me;  
And to myself I seem to muse on One  
By sorrow laid asleep; or borne away,  
A human being destined to awake  
To human life, or something very near  
To human life, when he shall come again  
For whom she suffered. Yes, it would  
have grieved

Your very soul to see her : evermore  
 Her eyelids drooped, her eyes downward  
     were cast ;  
 And, when she at her table gave me food,  
 She did not look at me. Her voice was  
     low,  
 Her body was subdued. In every act  
 Pertaining to her house-affairs, appeared  
 The careless stillness of a thinking mind  
 Self-occupied ; to which all outward things  
 Are like an idle matter. Still she sighed,  
 But yet no motion of the breast was seen,  
 No heaving of the heart. While by the  
     fire  
 We sate together, sighs came on my ear,  
 I knew not how, and hardly whence they  
     came.

Ere my departure, to her care I gave,  
 For her son's use, some tokens of regard,  
 Which with a look of welcome she re-  
     ceived ;  
 And I exhorted her to place her trust  
 In God's good love, and seek his help by  
     prayer.  
 I took my staff, and, when I kissed her  
     babe,  
 The tears stood in her eyes. I left her  
     then  
 With the best hope and comfort I could  
     give :  
 She thanked me for my wish ;—but for my  
     hope  
 It seemed she did not thank me.

I returned,  
 And took my rounds along this road again  
 When on its sunny bank the primrose  
     flower  
 Peeped forth, to give an earnest of the  
     Spring.  
 I found her sad and drooping : she had  
     learned  
 No tidings of her husband ; if he lived,  
 She knew not that he lived ; if he were dead,  
 She knew not he was dead. She seemed  
     the same  
 In person and appearance ; but her house  
 Bespake a sleepy hand of negligence ;  
 The floor was neither dry nor neat, the  
     hearth  
 Was comfortless, and her small lot of books,  
 Which, in the cottage-window, heretofore  
 Had been piled up against the corner panes  
 In seemly order, now, with straggling leaves

Lay scattered here and there, open or  
     shut,  
 As they had chanced to fall. Her infant  
     Babe  
 Had from his Mother caught the trick of  
     grief,  
 And sighed among its playthings. I with-  
     drew,  
 And once again entering the garden saw,  
 More plainly still, that poverty and grief  
 Were now come nearer to her : weeds de-  
     faced  
 The hardened soil, and knots of withered  
     grass :  
 No ridges there appeared of clear black  
     mould,  
 No winter greenness ; of her herbs and  
     flowers,  
 It seemed the better part was gnawed away  
 Or trampled into earth ; a chain of straw.  
 Which had been twined about the slender  
     stem  
 Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root ;  
 The bark was nibbled round by truant  
     sheep.  
 —Margaret stood near, her infant in her  
     arms,  
 And, noting that my eye was on the tree,  
 She said, ' I fear it will be dead and gone  
 Ere Robert come again.' When to the  
     House  
 We had returned together, she enquired  
 If I had any hope :—but for her babe  
 And for her little orphan boy, she said,  
 She had no wish to live, that she must die  
 Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom  
 Still in its place ; his Sunday garments hung  
 Upon the self-same nail ; his very staff  
 Stood undisturbed behind the door.

And when,  
 In bleak December, I retraced this way,  
 She told me that her little babe was dead,  
 And she was left alone. She now, released  
 From her maternal cares, had taken up  
 The employment common through these  
     wilds, and gained,  
 By spinning hemp, a pittance for herself ;  
 And for this end had hired a neighbour's  
     boy  
 To give her needful help. That very time  
 Most willingly she put her work aside,  
 And walked with me along the miry road,  
 Heedless how far ; and, in such piteous  
     sort

That any heart had ached to hear her,  
begged

That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would  
ask

For him whom she had lost. We parted  
then—

Our final parting ; for from that time forth  
Did many seasons pass ere I returned

Into this tract again.

Nine tedious years ;  
From their first separation, nine long years,  
She lingered in unquiet widowhood ;

A Wife and Widow. Needs must it have  
been

A sore heart-wasting ! I have heard, my  
Friend,

That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate  
Alone, through half the vacant sabbath  
day ;

And, if a dog passed by, she still would  
quit

The shade, and look abroad. On this old  
bench

For hours she sate ; and evermore her eye  
Was busy in the distance, shaping things  
That made her heart beat quick. You see

that path,  
Now faint,—the grass has crept o'er its  
grey line ;

There, to and fro, she paced through many  
a day

Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp  
That girt her waist, spinning the long-drawn  
thread

With backward steps. Yet ever as there  
passed

A man whose garments showed the soldier's  
red,

Or crippled mendicant in sailor's garb,  
The little child who sate to turn the wheel

Ceased from his task ; and she with  
faltering voice

Made many a fond enquiry ; and when they,  
Whose presence gave no comfort, were gone  
by,

Her heart was still more sad. And by yon  
gate,

That bars the traveller's road, she often  
stood,

And when a stranger horseman came, the  
latch

Would lift, and in his face look wistfully ;  
Most happy, if, from aught discovered there

Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat

The same sad question. Meanwhile her  
poor Hut

Sank to decay ; for he was gone, whose  
hand,

At the first nipping of October frost,  
Closed up each chink, and with fresh

bands of straw  
Chequered the green-grown thatch. And

so she lived  
Through the long winter, reckless and

alone ;  
Until her house by frost, and thaw, and

rain,  
Was sapped ; and while she slept, the

nightly damps  
Did chill her breast ; and in the stormy

day  
Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the wind,  
Even at the side of her own fire. Yet still

She loved this wretched spot, nor would  
for worlds

Have parted hence ; and still that length  
of road,

And this rude bench, one torturing hope  
endeared,

Fast rooted at her heart : and here, my  
Friend,—

In sickness she remained ; and here she  
died ;

Last human tenant of these ruined walls !"

The old Man ceased : he saw that I was  
moved ;

From that low bench, rising instinctively  
I turned aside in weakness, nor had power

To thank him for the tale which he had  
told.

I stood, and leaning o'er the garden wall  
Reviewed that Woman's sufferings ; and it

seemed  
To comfort me while with a brother's love

I blessed her in the impotence of grief.  
Then towards the cottage I returned ; and

traced  
Fondly, though with an interest more mild,

That secret spirit of humanity  
Which, 'mid the calm oblivious tendencies

Of nature, 'mid her plants, and weeds, and  
flowers,

And silent overgrowings, still survived.  
The old Man, noting this, resumed, and

said,  
" My Friend ! enough to sorrow you have

given,



The purposes of wisdom ask no more :  
 Nor more would she have craved as due to  
     One  
 Who, in her worst distress, had oft-times  
     felt  
 The unbounded might of prayer ; and  
     learned, with soul  
 Fixed on the Cross, that consolation springs,  
 From sources deeper far than deepest  
     pain,  
 For the meek Sufferer. Why then should  
     we read  
 The forms of things with an unworthy eye ?  
 She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is  
     here.  
 I well remember that those very plumes,  
 Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on  
     that wall,  
 By mist and silent rain-drops silvered o'er,  
 As once I passed, into my heart conveyed  
 So still an image of tranquillity,  
 So calm and still, and looked so beautiful  
 Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled my  
     mind,  
 That what we feel of sorrow and despair  
 From ruin and from change, and all the  
     grief  
 That passing shows of Being leave behind,  
 Appeared an idle dream, that could main-  
     tain,  
 Nowhere, dominion o'er the enlightened  
     spirit  
 Whose meditative sympathies repose  
 Upon the breast of Faith. I turned away,  
 And walked along my road in happiness."

He ceased. Ere long the sun declining  
     shot  
 A slant and mellow radiance, which began  
 To fall upon us, while, beneath the trees,  
 We sat on that low bench : and now we  
     felt,  
 Admonished thus, the sweet hour coming  
     on.  
 A linnet warbled from those lofty elms,  
 A thrush sang loud, and other melodies,  
 At distance heard, peopled the milder air.  
 The old Man rose, and, with a sprightly  
     mien  
 Of hopeful preparation, grasped his staff ;  
 Together casting then a farewell look  
 Upon those silent walls, we left the shade ;  
 And, ere the stars were visible, had reached  
 A village-inn,—our evening resting-place.

## BOOK SECOND

## THE SOLITARY

## ARGUMENT

The Author describes his travels with the Wanderer, whose character is further illustrated—Morning scene, and View of a Village Wake—Wanderer's account of a Friend whom he purposes to visit—View, from an eminence, of the Valley which his Friend had chosen for his retreat—Sound of singing from below—A funeral procession—Descent into the Valley—Observations drawn from the Wanderer at sight of a book accidentally discovered in a recess in the Valley—Meeting with the Wanderer's friend, the Solitary—Wanderer's description of the mode of burial in this mountainous district—Solitary contrasts with this, that of the individual carried a few minutes before from the cottage—The cottage entered—Description of the Solitary's apartment—Repast there—View, from the window, of two mountain summits ; and the Solitary's description of the companionship they afford him—Account of the departed inmate of the cottage—Description of a grand spectacle upon the mountains, with its effect upon the Solitary's mind—Leave the house.

In days of yore how fortunately fared  
 The Minstrel ! wandering on from hall to  
     hall,  
 Baronial court or royal ; cheered with gifts  
 Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise ;  
 Now meeting on his road an armed knight,  
 Now resting with a pilgrim by the side  
 Of a clear brook ;—beneath an abbey's roof  
 One evening sumptuously lodged ; the next,  
 Humbly in a religious hospital ;  
 Or with some merry outlaws of the wood ;  
 Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell.  
 Him, sleeping or awake, the robber spared ;  
 He walked—protected from the sword of  
     war  
 By virtue of that sacred instrument  
 His harp, suspended at the traveller's side ;  
 His dear companion wheresoe'er he went  
 Opening from land to land an easy way  
 By melody, and by the charm of verse.  
 Yet not the noblest of that honoured Race  
 Drew happier, loftier, more impassioned,  
     thoughts  
 From his long journeyings and eventful life,  
 Than this obscure Itinerant had skill  
 To gather, ranging through the tamer  
     ground  
 Of these our unimaginative days ;

Both while he trod the earth in humblest guise  
 Accoutred with his burthen and his staff ;  
 And now, when free to move with lighter pace.

What wonder, then, if I, whose favourite school  
 Hath been the fields, the roads, and rural lanes,  
 Looked on this guide with reverential love?  
 Each with the other pleased, we now pursued

Our journey, under favourable skies.  
 Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a light  
 Unfailing : not a hamlet could we pass,  
 Rarely a house, that did not yield to him  
 Remembrances ; or from his tongue call forth

Some way-beguiling tale. Nor less regard  
 Accompanied those strains of apt discourse,  
 Which nature's various objects might inspire ;

And in the silence of his face I read  
 His overflowing spirit. Birds and beasts,  
 And the mute fish that glances in the stream,  
 And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,  
 And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,  
 The fowl domestic, and the household dog—  
 In his capacious mind, he loved them all :  
 Their rights acknowledging he felt for all.  
 Oft was occasion given me to perceive  
 How the calm pleasures of the pasturing herd  
 To happy contemplation soothed his walk ;  
 How the poor brute's condition, forced to run

Its course of suffering in the public road,  
 Sad contrast ! all too often smote his heart  
 With unavailing pity. Rich in love  
 And sweet humanity, he was, himself,  
 To the degree that he desired, beloved.  
 Smiles of good-will from faces that he knew  
 Greeted us all day long ; we took our seats  
 By many a cottage-hearth, where he received

The welcome of an Inmate from afar,  
 And I at once forgot, I was a Stranger.  
 —Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts,  
 Huts where his charity was blest ; his voice  
 Heard as the voice of an experienced friend.  
 And, sometimes—where the poor man held dispute

With his own mind, unable to subdue  
 Impatience through inaptness to perceive

General distress in his particular lot ;  
 Or cherishing resentment, or in vain  
 Struggling against it ; with a soul perplexed,  
 And finding in herself no steady power  
 To draw the line of comfort that divides  
 Calamity, the chastisement of Heaven,  
 From the injustice of our brother men—  
 To him appeal was made as to a judge ;  
 Who, with an understanding heart, allayed  
 The perturbation ; listened to the plea ;  
 Resolved the dubious point ; and sentence gave

So grounded, so applied, that it was heard  
 With softened spirit, even when it condemned.

Such intercourse I witnessed, while we roved,  
 Now as his choice directed, now as mine ;  
 Or both, with equal readiness of will,  
 Our course submitting to the changeful breeze

Of accident. But when the rising sun  
 Had three times called us to renew our walk,

My Fellow-traveller, with earnest voice,  
 As if the thought were but a moment old,  
 Claimed absolute dominion for the day.  
 We started—and he led me toward the hills,

Up through an ample vale, with higher hills

Before us, mountains stern and desolate ;  
 But, in the majesty of distance, now  
 Set off, and to our ken appearing fair  
 Of aspect, with aerial softness clad,  
 And beautified with morning's purple beams.

The wealthy, the luxurious, by the stress  
 Of business roused, or pleasure, ere their time,

May roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs  
 Of the fleet coursers they bestride, to raise  
 From earth the dust of morning, slow to rise ;

And they, if blest with health and hearts at ease,

Shall lack not their enjoyment :—but how faint

Compared with ours ! who, pacing side by side,

Could, with an eye of leisure, look on all  
 That we beheld ; and lend the listening sense

To every grateful sound of earth and air ;  
Pausing at will—our spirits braced, our  
thoughts

Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,  
And pure as dew bathing their crimson  
leaves.

Mount slowly, sun ! that we may journey  
long,

By this dark hill protected from thy beams !  
Such is the summer pilgrim's frequent  
wish ;

But quickly from among our morning  
thoughts

'Twas chased away : for, toward the western  
side

Of the broad vale, casting a casual glance,  
We saw a throng of people ; wherefore met ?  
Blithe notes of music, suddenly let loose  
On the thrilled ear, and flags uprising,  
yield

Prompt answer ; they proclaim the annual  
Wake,

Which the bright season favours.—Tabor  
and pipe

In purpose join to hasten or reprove  
The laggard Rustic ; and repay with boons  
Of merriment a party-coloured knot,  
Already formed upon the village-green.  
—Beyond the limits of the shadow cast

By the broad hill, glistened upon our sight  
That gay assemblage. Round them and  
above,

Glitter, with dark recesses interposed,  
Casement, and cottage-roof, and stems of  
trees

Half-veiled in vapoury cloud, the silver  
steam

Of dews fast melting on their leafy boughs  
By the strong sunbeams smitten. Like a  
mast

Of gold, the Maypole shines ; as if the rays  
Of morning, aided by exhaling dew,  
With gladsome influence could re-animate  
The faded garlands dangling from its sides.

Said I, "The music and the sprightly  
scene

Invite us ; shall we quit our road, and join  
These festive matins ?"—He replied, "Not  
loth

To linger I would here with you partake,  
Not one hour merely, but till evening's  
close,

The simple pastimes of the day and place.  
By the fleet Racers, ere the sun be set,  
The turf of yon large pasture will be  
skimmed ;

There, too, the lusty Wrestlers shall con-  
tend :

But know we not that he, who intermits  
The appointed task and duties of the day,  
Untunes full oft the pleasures of the day ;  
Checking the finer spirits that refuse  
To flow when purposes are lightly changed ?  
A length of journey yet remains untraced :  
Let us proceed." Then, pointing with his  
staff

Raised toward those craggy summits, his  
intent

He thus imparted :—

"In a spot that lies  
Among yon mountain fastnesses concealed,  
You will receive, before the hour of noon,  
Good recompense, I hope, for this day's  
toil,

From sight of One who lives secluded  
there,

Lonesome and lost : of whom, and whose  
past life,

(Not to forestall such knowledge as may be  
More faithfully collected from himself)  
This brief communication shall suffice.

Though now sojourning there, he, like  
myself,

Sprang from a stock of lowly parentage  
Among the wilds of Scotland, in a tract  
Where many a sheltered and well-tended  
plant,

Bears, on the humblest ground of social  
life,

Blossoms of piety and innocence.  
Such grateful promises his youth displayed :  
And, having shown in study forward zeal,  
He to the Ministry was duly called ;  
And straight, incited by a curious mind  
Filled with vague hopes, he undertook the  
charge

Of Chaplain to a military troop  
Cheered by the Highland bagpipe, as they  
marched

In plaided vest,—his fellow-countrymen.  
This office filling, yet by native power  
And force of native inclination made  
An intellectual ruler in the haunts  
Of social vanity, he walked the world,  
Gay, and affecting graceful gaiety ;

Lax, buoyant—less a pastor with his flock  
Than a soldier among soldiers—lived and  
roamed

Where Fortune led:—and Fortune, who  
oft proves

The careless wanderer's friend, to him  
made known

A blooming Lady—a conspicuous flower,  
Admired for beauty, for her sweetness  
praised;

Whom he had sensibility to love,  
Ambition to attempt, and skill to win.

For this fair Bride, most rich in gifts of  
mind,

Nor sparingly endowed with worldly wealth,  
His office he relinquished; and retired  
From the world's notice to a rural home.  
Youth's season yet with him was scarcely  
past,

And she was in youth's prime. How free  
their love,

How full their joy! 'Till, pitiable doom!  
In the short course of one undreaded year  
Death blasted all. Death suddenly o'er-  
threw

Two lovely Children—all that they pos-  
sessed!

The Mother followed:—miserably bare  
The one Survivor stood; he wept, he  
prayed

For his dismissal, day and night, compelled  
To hold communion with the grave, and  
face

With pain the regions of eternity.  
An uncomplaining apathy displaced  
This anguish; and, indifferent to delight,  
To aim and purpose, he consumed his  
days,

To private interest dead, and public care.  
So lived he; so he might have died.

But now,  
To the wide world's astonishment, appeared  
A glorious opening, the unlooked-for dawn,  
That promised everlasting joy to France!  
Her voice of social transport reached even  
him!

He broke from his contracted bounds, re-  
paired

To the great City, an emporium then  
Of golden expectations, and receiving  
Freights every day from a new world of  
hope.

Thither his popular talents he transferred;

And, from the pulpit, zealously maintained  
The cause of Christ and civil liberty,  
As one, and moving to one glorious end.  
Intoxicating service! I might say  
A happy service; for he was sincere  
As vanity and fondness for applause,  
And new and shapeless wishes, would allow.

That righteous cause (such power hath  
freedom) bound,

For one hostility, in friendly league,  
Ethereal natures and the worst of slaves;  
Was served by rival advocates that came  
From regions opposite as heaven and hell.  
One courage seemed to animate them all:  
And, from the dazzling conquests daily  
gained

By their united efforts, there arose  
A proud and most presumptuous confidence  
In the transcendent wisdom of the age,  
And her discernment; not alone in rights,  
And in the origin and bounds of power  
Social and temporal; but in laws divine,  
Deduced by reason, or to faith revealed.

An overweening trust was raised; and fear  
Cast out, alike of person and of thing.  
Plague from this union spread, whose  
subtle bane

The strongest did not easily escape;  
And He, what wonder! took a mortal  
taint.

How shall I trace the change, how bear to  
tell

That he broke faith with them whom he  
had laid

In earth's dark chambers, with a Chris-  
tian's hope!

An infidel contempt of holy writ  
Stole by degrees upon his mind; and hence  
Life, like that Roman Janus, double-faced;  
Vilest hypocrisy—the laughing, gay  
Hypocrisy, not leagued with fear, but  
pride.

Smooth words he had to wheedle simple  
souls;

But, for disciples of the inner school,  
Old freedom was old servitude, and they  
The wisest whose opinions stooped the least  
To known restraints; and who most boldly  
drew

Hopeful prognostications from a creed,  
That, in the light of false philosophy,  
Spread like a halo round a misty moon,  
Widening its circle as the storms advance.

His sacred function was at length re-nounced;

And every day and every place enjoyed  
The unshackled layman's natural liberty;  
Speech, manners, morals, all without disguise.

I do not wish to wrong him; though the course

Of private life licentiously displayed  
Unhallowed actions—planted like a crown  
Upon the insolent aspiring brow  
Of spurious notions—worn as open signs  
Of prejudice subdued—still he retained,  
'Mid much abasement, what he had received  
From nature, an intense and glowing mind.  
Wherefore, when humbled Liberty grew weak,

And mortal sickness on her face appeared,  
He coloured objects to his own desire  
As with a lover's passion. Yet his moods  
Of pain were keen as those of better men,  
Nay keener, as his fortitude was less:  
And he continued, when worse days were come,

To deal about his sparkling eloquence,  
Struggling against the strange reverse with zeal

That showed like happiness. But, in despite

Of all this outside bravery, within,  
He neither felt encouragement nor hope:  
For moral dignity, and strength of mind,  
Were wanting; and simplicity of life;  
And reverence for himself; and, last and best,

Confiding thoughts, through love and fear  
of Him

Before whose sight the troubles of this world

Are vain, as billows in a tossing sea.

The glory of the times fading away—  
The splendour, which had given a festal air  
To self-importance, hallowed it, and veiled  
From his own sight—this gone, he forfeited  
All joy in human nature; was consumed,  
And vexed, and chafed, by levity and scorn,

And fruitless indignation; galled by pride;  
Made desperate by contempt of men who thrive

Before his sight in power or fame, and won,  
Without desert, what he desired; weak men,

Too weak even for his envy or his hate!  
Tormented thus, after a wandering course  
Of discontent, and inwardly opprest  
With malady—in part, I fear, provoked  
By weariness of life—he fixed his home,  
Or, rather say, sate down by very chance,  
Among these rugged hills; where now he dwells,

And wastes the sad remainder of his hours,  
Steeped in a self-indulging spleen, that wants not

Its own voluptuousness;—on this resolved,  
With this content, that he will live and die  
Forgotten,—at safe distance from 'a world  
Not moving to his mind.'"

These serious words  
Closed the preparatory notices

That served my Fellow-traveller to beguile  
The way, while we advanced up that wide vale.

Diverging now (as if his quest had been  
Some secret of the mountains, cavern, fall  
Of water, or some lofty eminence,  
Renowned for splendid prospect far and wide)

We scaled, without a track to ease our steps,

A steep ascent; and reached a dreary plain,

With a tumultuous waste of huge hill tops  
Before us; savage region! which I paced  
Dispirited: when, all at once, behold!  
Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,  
A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high  
Among the mountains; even as if the spot  
Had been from eldest time by wish of theirs  
So placed, to be shut out from all the world!  
Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn;  
With rocks encompassed, save that to the south

Was one small opening, where a heath-clad ridge

Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close;  
A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,  
A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,  
And one bare dwelling; one abode, no more!

It seemed the home of poverty and toil,  
Though not of want: the little fields, made green

By husbandry of many thrifty years,  
Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland house.  
—There crows the cock, single in his domain:

The small birds find in spring no thicket  
there  
To shroud them; only from the neighbour-  
ing vales  
The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill tops,  
Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder place.

Ah! what a sweet Recess, thought I, is  
here!

Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease  
Upon a bed of heath;—full many a spot  
Of hidden beauty have I chanced to espy  
Among the mountains; never one like this;  
So lonesome, and so perfectly secure;  
Not melancholy—no, for it is green,  
And bright, and fertile, furnished in itself  
With the few needful things that life requires.  
—In rugged arms how softly does it lie,  
How tenderly protected! Far and near  
We have an image of the pristine earth,  
The planet in its nakedness: were this  
Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,  
First, last, and single, in the breathing  
world,

It could not be more quiet; peace is here  
Or nowhere; days unruffled by the gale  
Of public news or private; years that pass  
Forgetfully; uncalled upon to pay  
The common penalties of mortal life,  
Sickness, or accident, or grief, or pain.

On these and kindred thoughts intent I  
lay

In silence musing by my Comrade's side,  
He also silent; when from out the heart  
Of that profound abyss a solemn voice,  
Or several voices in one solemn sound,  
Was heard ascending; mournful, deep, and  
slow

The cadence, as of psalms—a funeral dirge!  
We listened, looking down upon the hut,  
But seeing no one: meanwhile from below  
The strain continued, spiritual as before;  
And now distinctly could I recognise  
These words:—"*Shall in the grave thy love  
be known,*

*In death thy faithfulness?*"—"God rest his  
soul!"

Said the old man, abruptly breaking  
silence,—

"He is departed, and finds peace at last!"

This scarcely spoken, and those holy  
strains

Not ceasing, forth appeared in view a band  
Of rustic persons, from behind the hut  
Bearing a coffin in the midst, with which  
They shaped their course along the sloping  
side

Of that small valley, singing as they moved;  
A sober company and few, the men  
Bare-headed, and all decently attired!  
Some steps when they had thus advanced,  
the dirge

Ended; and, from the stillness that ensued  
Recovering, to my Friend I said, "You  
spake,

Methought, with apprehension that these  
rites

Are paid to Him upon whose shy retreat  
This day we purposed to intrude."—"I did  
so,

But let us hence, that we may learn the  
truth:

Perhaps it is not he but some one else  
For whom this pious service is performed;  
Some other tenant of the solitude."

So, to a steep and difficult descent  
Trusting ourselves, we wound from crag to  
crag,

Where passage could be won; and, as the  
last

Of the mute train, behind the heathy top  
Of that off-sloping outlet, disappeared,  
I, more impatient in my downward course,  
Had landed upon easy ground; and there  
Stood waiting for my Comrade. When  
behold

An object that enticed my steps aside!  
A narrow, winding, entry opened out  
Into a platform—that lay, sheepfold-wise,  
Enclosed between an upright mass of rock  
And one old moss-grown wall;—a cool  
recess,

And fanciful! For where the rock and wall  
Met in an angle, hung a penthouse, framed  
By thrusting two rude staves into the wall  
And overlaying them with mountain sods;  
To weather-fend a little turf-built seat  
Whereon a full-grown man might rest, nor  
dread

The burning sunshine, or a transient shower;  
But the whole plainly wrought by children's  
hands!

Whose skill had thronged the floor with a  
proud show

Of baby-houses, curiously arranged;

Nor wanting ornament of walks between,  
With mimic trees inserted in the turf,  
And gardens interposed. Pleased with the  
sight,

I could not choose but beckon to my Guide,  
Who, entering, round him threw a careless  
glance,

Impatient to pass on, when I exclaimed,  
"Lo! what is here?" and, stooping down,  
drew forth

A book, that, in the midst of stones and  
moss

And wreck of party-coloured earthen-ware,  
Aptly disposed, had lent its help to raise  
One of those petty structures. "His it  
must be!"

Exclaimed the Wanderer, "cannot but be  
his,

And he is gone!" The book, which in my  
hand

Had opened of itself (for it was swoln  
With searching damp, and seemingly had  
lain

To the injurious elements exposed  
From week to week,) I found to be a work  
In the French tongue, a Novel of Voltaire,  
His famous Optimist. "Unhappy Man!"  
Exclaimed my Friend: "here then has been  
to him

Retreat within retreat, a sheltering-place  
Within how deep a shelter! He had fits,  
Even to the last, of genuine tenderness,  
And loved the haunts of children: here, no  
doubt,

Pleasing and pleased, he shared their simple  
sports,

Or sate companionless; and here the book,  
Left and forgotten in his careless way,  
Must by the cottage-children have been  
found:

Heaven bless them, and their inconsiderate  
work!

To what odd purpose have the darlings  
turned

This sad memorial of their hapless friend!"

"Me," said I, "most doth it surprise,  
to find

Such book in such a place!"—"A book it  
is,"

He answered, "to the Person suited well,  
Though little suited to surrounding things:  
'Tis strange, I grant; and stranger still had  
been

To see the Man who owned it, dwelling here,  
With one poor shepherd, far from all the  
world!—

Now, if our errand hath been thrown away,  
As from these intimations I forebode,  
Grieved shall I be—less for my sake than  
yours,  
And least of all for him who is no more."

By this, the book was in the old Man's  
hand;

And he continued, glancing on the leaves  
An eye of scorn:—"The lover," said he,  
"doomed

To love when hope hath failed him—whom  
no death

Of privacy is deep enough to hide,  
Hath yet his bracelet or his lock of hair,  
And that is joy to him. When change of  
times

Hath summoned kings to scaffolds, do but  
give

The faithful servant, who must hide his  
head

Henceforth in whatsoever nook he may,  
A kerchief sprinkled with his master's blood,  
And he too hath his comforter. How poor,  
Beyond all poverty how destitute,  
Must that Man have been left, who, hither  
driven,

Flying or seeking, could yet bring with him  
No dearer relique, and no better stay,  
Than this dull product of a scoffer's pen,  
Impure conceits discharging from a heart  
Hardened by impious pride!—I did not fear  
To tax you with this journey;"—mildly  
said

My venerable Friend, as forth we stepped  
Into the presence of the cheerful light—  
"For I have knowledge that you do not  
shrink

From moving spectacles;—but let us on."

So speaking, on he went, and at the word  
I followed, till he made a sudden stand:  
For full in view, approaching through a  
gate

That opened from the enclosure of green  
fields

Into the rough uncultivated ground,  
Behold the Man whom he had fancied dead!  
I knew from his deportment, mien, and  
dress,

That it could be no other; a pale face,

A meagre person, tall, and in a garb  
Not rustic—dull and faded like himself!  
He saw us not, though distant but few  
steps;

For he was busy, dealing, from a store  
Upon a broad leaf carried, choicest strings  
Of red ripe currants; gift by which he strove,  
With intermixture of endearing words,  
To soothe a Child, who walked beside him,  
weeping

As if disconsolate.—“They to the grave  
Are bearing him, my Little-one,” he said,  
“To the dark pit; but he will feel no pain;  
His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.”

More might have followed—but my  
honoured Friend  
Broke in upon the Speaker with a frank  
And cordial greeting.—Vivid was the light  
That flashed and sparkled from the other's  
eyes;

He was all fire: no shadow on his brow  
Remained, nor sign of sickness on his face.  
Hands joined he with his Visitant,—a grasp,  
An eager grasp; and many moments'  
space—

When the first glow of pleasure was no  
more,  
And, of the sad appearance which at once  
Had vanished, much was come and  
coming back—

An amicable smile retained the life  
Which it had unexpectedly received,  
Upon his hollow cheek. “How kind,” he  
said,

“Nor could your coming have been better  
timed;

For this, you see, is in our narrow world  
A day of sorrow. I have here a charge”—  
And, speaking thus, he patted tenderly  
The sun-burnt forehead of the weeping  
child—

“A little mourner, whom it is my task  
To comfort;—but how came ye?—if yon  
track

(Which doth at once befriend us and be-  
tray)

Conducted hither your most welcome feet,  
Ye could not miss the funeral train—they  
yet

Have scarcely disappeared.” “This  
blooming Child,”

Said the old Man, “is of an age to weep  
At any grave or solemn spectacle,

Inly distressed or overpowered with awe,  
He knows not wherefore;—but the boy to-  
day,

Perhaps is shedding orphan's tears; you  
also

Must have sustained a loss.”—“The hand  
of Death,”

He answered, “has been here; but could  
not well

Have fallen more lightly, if it had not fallen  
Upon myself.”—The other left these words  
Unnoticed, thus continuing—

“From yon crag,  
Down whose steep sides we dropped into  
the vale,

We heard the hymn they sang—a solemn  
sound

Heard anywhere; but in a place like this  
‘Tis more than human! Many precious  
rites

And customs of our rural ancestry  
Are gone, or stealing from us; this, I hope,  
Will last for ever. Oft on my way have I  
Stood still, though but a casual passenger,  
So much I felt the awfulness of life,  
In that one moment when the corse is  
lifted

In silence, with a hush of decency;  
Then from the threshold moves with song  
of peace,

And confidential yearnings, towards its  
home,

Its final home on earth. What traveller—  
who—

(How far soe'er a stranger) does not own  
The bond of brotherhood, when he sees  
them go,

A mute procession on the houseless road;  
Or passing by some single tenement  
Or clustered dwellings, where again they  
raise

The monitory voice? But most of all  
It touches, it confirms, and elevates,  
Then, when the body, soon to be consigned  
Ashes to ashes, dust bequeathed to dust,  
Is raised from the church-aisle, and forward  
borne

Upon the shoulders of the next in love,  
The nearest in affection or in blood;  
Yea, by the very mourners who had knelt  
Beside the coffin, resting on its lid  
In silent grief their unlifted heads,  
And heard meanwhile the Psalmist's  
mournful plaint,



And that most awful scripture which declares

We shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed !

—Have I not seen—ye likewise may have seen—

Son, husband, brothers—brothers side by side,

And son and father also side by side,

Rise from that posture :—and in concert move,

On the green turf following the vested Priest,

Four dear supporters of one senseless weight,

From which they do not shrink, and under which

They faint not, but advance towards the open grave

Step after step—together, with their firm

Unhidden faces : he that suffers most,

He outwardly, and inwardly perhaps,

The most serene, with most undaunted eye !—

Oh ! blest are they who live and die like these,

Loved with such love, and with such sorrow mourned !”

“ That poor Man taken hence to-day,” replied

The Solitary, with a faint sarcastic smile Which did not please me, “ must be deemed, I fear,

Of the unblest ; for he will surely sink Into his mother earth without such pomp

Of grief, depart without occasion given

By him for such array of fortitude.

Full seventy winters hath he lived, and mark !

This simple Child will mourn his one short hour,

And I shall miss him : scanty tribute ! yet, This wanting, he would leave the sight of men,

If love were his sole claim upon their care, Like a ripe date which in the desert falls

Without a hand to gather it.”

At this

I interposed, though loth to speak, and said,

“ Can it be thus among so small a band As ye must needs be here ? in such a place I would not willingly, methinks, lose sight

Of a departing cloud.”—“ ’Twas not for love”—

Answered the sick Man with a careless voice—

“ That I came hither ; neither have I found Among associates who have power of speech, Nor in such other converse as is here, Temptation so prevailing as to change

That mood, or undermine my first resolve.” Then, speaking in like careless sort, he said

To my benign Companion,—“ Pity ’tis That fortune did not guide you to this

house A few days earlier ; then would you have seen

What stuff the Dwellers in a solitude,

That seems by Nature hollowed out to be

The seat and bosom of pure innocence,

Are made of ; an ungracious matter this !

Which, for truth’s sake, yet in remembrance too

Of past discussions with this zealous friend

And advocate of humble life, I now

Will force upon his notice ; undeterred

By the example of his own pure course, And that respect and deference which a

soul

May fairly claim, by niggard age enriched

In what she most doth value, love of God

And his frail creature Man ;—but ye shall hear.

I talk—and ye are standing in the sun Without refreshment !”

Quickly had he spoken,

And, with light steps still quicker than his words,

Led toward the Cottage. Homely was the spot ;

And, to my feeling, ere we reached the door,

Had almost a forbidding nakedness ;

Less fair, I grant, even painfully less fair, Than it appeared when from the beetling

rock

We had looked down upon it. All within,

As left by the departed company,

Was silent ; save the solitary clock

That on mine ear ticked with a mournful sound.—

Following our Guide we clomb the cottage-stairs

And reached a small apartment dark and low,

Which was no sooner entered than our Host

Said gaily, "This is my domain, my cell,  
My hermitage, my cabin, what you will—  
I love it better than a snail his house.  
But now ye shall be feasted with our best."

So, with more ardour than an unripe girl  
Left one day mistress of her mother's stores,  
He went about his hospitable task.  
My eyes were busy, and my thoughts no  
less,

And pleased I looked upon my grey-haired  
Friend,

As if to thank him ; he returned that look,  
Cheered, plainly, and yet serious. What  
a wreck

Had we about us ! scattered was the floor,  
And, in like sort, chair, window-seat, and  
shelf,

With books, maps, fossils, withered plants  
and flowers,

And tufts of mountain moss. Mechanic  
tools

Lay intermixed with scraps of paper, some  
Scribbled with verse : a broken angling-rod  
And shattered telescope, together linked  
By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook ;  
And instruments of music, some half-made,  
Some in disgrace, hung dangling from the  
walls.

But speedily the promise was fulfilled ;  
A feast before us, and a courteous Host  
Inviting us in glee to sit and eat.  
A napkin, white as foam of that rough  
brook

By which it had been bleached, o'erspread  
the board ;

And was itself half-covered with a store  
Of dainties,—oaten bread, curd, cheese,  
and cream ;

And cakes of butter curiously embossed,  
Butter that had imbibed from meadow-  
flowers

A golden hue, delicate as their own  
Faintly reflected in a lingering stream.  
Nor lacked, for more delight on that warm  
day,

Our table, small parade of garden fruits,  
And whortle-berries from the mountain side.  
The Child, who long ere this had stilled  
his sobs,

Was now a help to his late comforter,  
And moved, a willing Page, as he was bid,  
Ministering to our need.

In genial mood,

While at our pastoral banquet thus we sate  
Fronting the window of that little cell,  
I could not, ever and anon, forbear  
To glance an upward look on two huge  
Peaks

That from some other vale peered into this.  
"Those lusty twins," exclaimed our host,  
"if here

It were your lot to dwell, would soon  
become

Your prized companions.—Many are the  
notes

Which, in his tuneful course, the wind  
draws forth

From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and  
dashing shores ;

And well those lofty brethren bear their  
part

In the wild concert—chiefly when the storm  
Rides high ; then all the upper air they fill  
With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow,  
Like smoke, along the level of the blast,  
In mighty current ; theirs, too, is the song  
Of stream and headlong flood that seldom  
fails ;

And, in the grim and breathless hour of  
noon,

Methinks that I have heard them echo back  
The thunder's greeting. Nor have nature's  
laws

Left them ungifted with a power to yield  
Music of finer tone ; a harmony,  
So do I call it, though it be the hand  
Of silence, though there be no voice ;—the  
clouds,

The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,  
Motions of moonlight, all come thither—  
touch,

And have an answer—thither come, and  
shape

A language not unwelcome to sick hearts  
And idle spirits :—there the sun himself,  
At the calm close of summer's longest day,  
Rests his substantial orb ;—between those  
heights

And on the top of either pinnacle,  
More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue  
vault,

Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.  
Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man  
Than the mute agents stirring there :—  
alone

I here do I sit and watch——"

A fall of voice,

Regretted like the nightingale's last note,  
Had scarcely closed this high-wrought strain  
of rapture

Ere with inviting smile the Wanderer said :  
" Now for the tale with which you threat-  
ened us ! "

" In truth the threat escaped me unawares :  
Should the tale tire you, let this challenge  
stand

For my excuse. Dissevered from mankind,  
As to your eyes and thoughts we must have  
seemed

When ye looked down upon us from the  
crag,

Islanders 'mid a stormy mountain sea,  
We are not so ;—perpetually we touch  
Upon the vulgar ordinances of the world ;  
And he, whom this our cottage hath to-day  
Relinquished, lived dependent for his bread  
Upon the laws of public charity.

The Housewife, tempted by such slender  
gains

As might from that occasion be distilled,  
Opened, as she before had done for me,  
Her doors to admit this homeless Pensioner ;  
The portion gave of coarse but wholesome  
fare

Which appetite required—a blind dull nook,  
Such as she had, the *kennel* of his rest !

This, in itself not ill, would yet have been  
Ill borne in earlier life ; but his was now  
The still contentedness of seventy years.

Calm did he sit under the wide-spread tree  
Of his old age : and yet less calm and  
meek,

Winningly meek or venerably calm,  
Than slow and torpid ; paying in this wise  
A penalty, if penalty it were,

For spendthrift feats, excesses of his prime.  
I loved the old Man, for I pitied him !  
A task it was, I own, to hold discourse  
With one so slow in gathering up his  
thoughts,

But he was a cheap pleasure to my eyes ;  
Mild, inoffensive, ready in *his* way,  
And helpful to his utmost power : and there  
Our housewife knew full well what she pos-  
sessed !

He was her vassal of all labour, tilled  
Her garden, from the pasture fetched her  
kine ;

And, one among the orderly array  
Of hay-makers, beneath the burning sun  
Maintained his place ; or heedfully pursued

His course, on errands bound, to other vales,  
Leading sometimes an inexperienced child  
Too young for any profitable task.

So moved he like a shadow that performed  
Substantial service. Mark me now, and  
learn

For what reward !—The moon her monthly  
round

Hath not completed since our dame, the  
queen

Of this one cottage and this lonely dale,  
Into my little sanctuary rushed—

Voice to a rueful treble humanized,  
And features in deplorable dismay.

I treat the matter lightly, but, alas !

It is most serious :—persevering rain  
Had fallen in torrents ; all the mountain  
tops

Were hidden, and black vapours coursed  
their sides ;

This had I seen, and saw ; but, till she  
spake,

Was wholly ignorant that my ancient  
Friend—

Who at her bidding, early and alone,  
Had clomb aloft to delve the moorland turf

For winter fuel—to his noontide meal  
Returned not, and now, haply, on the  
heights

Lay at the mercy of this raging storm.

' Inhuman ! '—said I ' was an old Man's  
life

Not worth the trouble of a thought ?—alas !  
This notice comes too late.' With joy I  
saw

Her husband enter—from a distant vale.  
We sallied forth together ; found the tools

Which the neglected veteran had dropped,  
But through all quarters looked for him in  
vain.

We shouted—but no answer ! Darkness  
fell

Without remission of the blast or shower,  
And fears for our own safety drove us  
home.

I, who weep little, did, I will confess,  
The moment I was seated here alone,

Honour my little cell with some few tears  
Which anger and resentment could not dry.

All night the storm endured ; and, soon as  
help

Had been collected from the neighbouring  
vale,

With morning we renewed our quest : the  
wind

Was fallen, the rain abated, but the hills  
Lay shrouded in impenetrable mist ;  
And long and hopelessly we sought in vain :  
Till, chancing on that lofty ridge to pass  
A heap of ruin—almost without walls  
And wholly without roof (the bleached re-  
mains

Of a small chapel, where, in ancient time,  
The peasants of these lonely valleys used  
To meet for worship on that central  
height)—

We there espied the object of our search,  
Lying full three parts buried among tufts  
Of heath-plant, under and above him  
strewn,

To baffle, as he might, the watery storm :  
And there we found him breathing peace-  
ably,

Snug as a child that hides itself in sport  
'Mid a green hay-cock in a sunny field.  
We spake—he made reply, but would not  
stir

At our entreaty ; less from want of power  
Than apprehension and bewildering  
thoughts.

So was he lifted gently from the ground,  
And with their freight homeward the  
shepherds moved

Through the dull mist, I following—when  
a step,

A single step, that freed me from the skirts  
Of the blind vapour, opened to my view  
Glory beyond all glory ever seen  
By waking sense or by the dreaming soul !  
The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,  
Was of a mighty city—boldly say  
A wilderness of building, sinking far  
And self-withdrawn into a boundless depth,  
Far sinking into splendour—without end !  
Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,  
With alabaster domes, and silver spires,  
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high  
Uplifted ; here, serene pavilions bright,  
In avenues disposed ; there, towers begirt  
With battlements that on their restless  
fronts

Bore stars—illumination of all gems !  
By earthly nature had the effect been  
wrought

Upon the dark materials of the storm  
Now pacified ; on them, and on the coves

And mountain-steeps and summits, where-  
unto

The vapours had receded, taking there  
Their station under a cerulean sky.

Oh, 'twas an unimaginable sight !  
Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and  
emerald turf,

Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire  
sky,

Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed,  
Molten together, and composing thus,  
Each lost in each, that marvellous array  
Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge  
Fantastic pomp of structure without name,  
In fleecy folds voluminous, enwrapped.  
Right in the midst, where interspace ap-  
peared

Of open court, an object like a throne  
Under a shining canopy of state  
Stood fixed ; and fixed resemblances were  
seen

To implements of ordinary use,  
But vast in size, in substance glorified ;  
Such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld  
In vision—forms uncouth of mightiest  
power

For admiration and mysterious awe.  
This little Vale, a dwelling-place of Man,  
Lay low beneath my feet ; 'twas visible—  
I saw not, but I felt that it was there.  
That which I *saw* was the revealed abode  
Of Spirits in beatitude : my heart  
Swelled in my breast—' I have been dead,'

I cried,  
'And now I live ! Oh ! wherefore *do* I  
live ?'

And with that pang I prayed to be no  
more !—

—But I forget our Charge, as utterly  
I then forgot him :—there I stood and  
gazed :

The apparition faded not away,  
And I descended.

Having reached the house,  
I found its rescued inmate safely lodged,  
And in serene possession of himself,  
Beside a fire whose genial warmth seemed  
met

By a faint shining from the heart, a gleam,  
Of comfort, spread over his pallid face.  
Great show of joy the housewife made, and  
truly

Was glad to find her conscience set at  
ease ;

And not less glad, for sake of her good name,  
That the poor Sufferer had escaped with life.  
But, though he seemed at first to have received  
No harm, and uncomplaining as before  
Went through his usual tasks, a silent change  
Soon showed itself : he lingered three short weeks ;  
And from the cottage hath been borne to-day.

So ends my dolorous tale, and glad I am  
That it is ended." At these words he turned—

And, with blithe air of open fellowship,  
Brought from the cupboard wine and stouter cheer,  
Like one who would be merry. Seeing this,  
My grey-haired Friend said courteously—  
"Nay, nay,

You have regaled us as a hermit ought ;  
Now let us forth into the sun !" —Our Host  
Rose, though reluctantly, and forth we went.

### BOOK THIRD

#### DESPONDENCY

##### ARGUMENT

Images in the Valley—Another Recess in it entered and described—Wanderer's sensations—Solitary's excited by the same objects—Contrast between these—Despondency of the Solitary gently reproved—Conversation exhibiting the Solitary's past and present opinions and feelings, till he enters upon his own History at length—His domestic felicity—Afflictions—Dejection—Roused by the French Revolution—Disappointment and disgust—Voyage to America—Disappointment and disgust pursue him—His return—His languor and depression of mind, from want of faith in the great truths of Religion, and want of confidence in the virtue of Mankind.

A HUMMING BEE—a little tinkling rill—  
A pair of falcons wheeling on the wing,  
In clamorous agitation, round the crest  
Of a tall rock, their airy citadel—  
By each and all of these the pensive ear  
Was greeted, in the silence that ensued,  
When through the cottage-threshold we had  
passed,

And, deep within that lonesome valley,  
stood

Once more beneath the concave of a blue  
And cloudless sky.—Anon exclaimed our  
Host—

Triumphantly dispersing with the taunt  
The shade of discontent which on his brow  
Had gathered,—"Ye have left my cell,—  
but see

How Nature hems you in with friendly  
arms !

And by her help ye are my prisoners still.  
But which way shall I lead you?—how  
contrive,

In spot so parsimoniously endowed,  
That the brief hours, which yet remain,  
may reap

Some recompense of knowledge or delight ?'  
So saying, round he looked, as if perplexed ;  
And, to remove those doubts, my grey-  
haired Friend

Said—"Shall we take this pathway for our  
guide?—

Upward it winds, as if, in summer heats,  
Its line had first been fashioned by the flock  
Seeking a place of refuge at the root  
Of yon black Yew-tree, whose protruded  
boughs

Darken the silver bosom of the crag,  
From which she draws her meagre sus-  
tenance.

There in commodious shelter may we rest.  
Or let us trace this streamlet to its source ;  
Feebly it tinkles with an earthy sound,  
And a few steps may bring us to the spot  
Where, haply, crowned with flowerets and  
green herbs,

The mountain infant to the sun comes  
forth,

Like human life from darkness."—A quick  
turn

Through a strait passage of encumbered  
ground,

Proved that such hope was vain :—for now  
we stood

Shut out from prospect of the open vale,  
And saw the water, that composed this rill,  
Descending, disembodied, and diffused  
O'er the smooth surface of an ample crag.  
Lofty, and steep, and naked as a tower.

All further progress here was barred ;—

And who,  
Thought I, if master of a vacant hour,  
Here would not linger, willingly detained ?

Whether to such wild objects he were led  
 When copious rains have magnified the  
     stream  
 Into a loud and white-robed waterfall,  
 Or introduced at this more quiet time.

Upon a semicirque of turf-clad ground,  
 The hidden nook discovered to our view  
 A mass of rock, resembling, as it lay  
 Right at the foot of that moist precipice,  
 A stranded ship, with keel upturned, that  
     rests

Fearless of winds and waves. Three  
     several stones

Stood near, of smaller size, and not unlike  
 To monumental pillars : and, from these  
 Some little space disjoined a pair were seen,  
 That with united shoulders bore aloft  
 A fragment, like an altar, flat and smooth :  
 Barren the tablet, yet thereon appeared  
 A tall and shining holly, that had found  
 A hospitable chink, and stood upright,  
 As if inserted by some human hand  
 In mockery, to wither in the sun,  
 Or lay its beauty flat before a breeze,  
 The first that entered. But no breeze did  
     now

Find entrance ;—high or low appeared no  
     trace

Of motion, save the water that descended,  
 Diffused adown that barrier of steep rock,  
 And softly creeping, like a breath of air,  
 Such as is sometimes seen, and hardly seen,  
 To brush the still breast of a crystal lake.

“ Behold a cabinet for sages built,  
 Which kings might envy !”—Praise to this  
     effect

Broke from the happy old Man's reverend  
     lip ;

Who to the Solitary turned, and said,  
 “ In sooth, with love's familiar privilege,  
 You have decried the wealth which is your  
     own.

Among these rocks and stones, methinks, I  
     see

More than the heedless impress that belongs  
 To lonely nature's casual work : they bear  
 A semblance strange of power intelligent,  
 And of design not wholly worn away.

• Boldest of plants that ever faced the wind,  
 • How gracefully that slender shrub looks forth  
 • From its fantastic birth-place ! And I own,  
 • Some shadowy intimations haunt me here,

That in these shows a chronicle survives  
 Of purposes akin to those of Man,  
 But wrought with mightier arm than now  
     prevails.

—Voiceless the stream descends into the  
     gulf

With timid lapse ;—and lo ! while in this  
     strait

I stand—the chasm of sky above my head  
 Is heaven's profoundest azure ; no domain  
 For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy,  
 Or to pass through ; but rather an abyss  
 In which the everlasting stars abide ;  
 And whose soft gloom, and boundless  
     depth, might tempt

The curious eye to look for them by day.  
 —Hail Contemplation ! from the stately  
     towers,

Reared by the industrious hand of human  
     art

To lift thee high above the misty air  
 And turbulence of murmuring cities vast ;  
 From academic groves, that have for thee  
 Been planted, hither come and find a lodge  
 To which thou mayst resort for holier  
     peace,—

From whose calm centre thou, through  
     height or depth,

Mayst penetrate, wherever truth shall lead ;  
 Measuring through all degrees, until the  
     scale

Of time and conscious nature disappear,  
 Lost in unsearchable eternity !”<sup>1</sup>

A pause ensued ; and with minuter care  
 We scanned the various features of the  
     scene :

And soon the Tenant of that lonely vale  
 With courteous voice thus spake—

“ I should have grieved  
 Hereafter, not escaping self-reproach,  
 If from my poor retirement ye had gone  
 Leaving this nook unvisited : but, in sooth,  
 Your unexpected presence had so roused  
 My spirits, that they were bent on enter-  
     prise ;

And, like an ardent hunter, I forgot,  
 Or, shall I say ?—disdained, the game that  
     lurks

At my own door. The shapes before our  
     eyes

And their arrangement, doubtless must be  
     deemed

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

The sport of Nature, aided by blind Chance  
Rudely to mock the works of toiling Man.  
And hence, this upright shaft of unbewn  
stone,

From Fancy, willing to set off her stores  
By sounding titles, hath acquired the name  
Of Pompey's pillar ; that I gravely style  
My Theban obelisk ; and, there, behold  
A Druid cromlech !—thus I entertain  
The antiquarian humour, and am pleased  
To skim along the surfaces of things,  
Beguiling harmlessly the listless hours.  
But if the spirit be oppressed by sense  
Of instability, revolt, decay,  
And change, and emptiness, these freaks of  
Nature

And her blind helper Chance, do *then*  
suffice

To quicken, and to aggravate—to feed  
Pity and scorn, and melancholy pride,  
Not less than that huge Pile (from some  
abyss

Of mortal power unquestionably sprung)  
Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks  
Confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind, round  
and round

Eddying within its vast circumference,  
On Sarum's naked plain—than pyramid  
Of Egypt, unsubverted, undissolved—  
Or Syria's marble ruins towering high  
Above the sandy desert, in the light  
Of sun or moon.—Forgive me, if I say  
That an appearance which hath raised your  
minds

To an exalted pitch (the self-same cause  
Different effect producing) is for me  
Fraught rather with depression than delight,  
Though shame it were, could I not look  
around,

By the reflection of your pleasure, pleased.  
Yet happier in my judgment, even than you  
With your bright transports fairly may be  
deemed,

The wandering Herbalist,—who, clear alike  
From vain, and, that worse evil, vexing  
thoughts,

Casts, if he ever chance to enter here,  
Upon these uncouth Forms a slight regard  
Of transitory interest, and peeps round  
For some rare floweret of the hills, or plant  
Of craggy fountain ; what he hopes for wins,  
Or learns, at least, that 'tis not to be won :  
Then, keen and eager, as a fine-nosed hound,  
By soul-engrossing instinct driven along

Through wood or open field, the harmless  
Man

Departs, intent upon his onward quest !—  
Nor is that Fellow-wanderer, so deem I,  
Less to be envied, (you may trace him oft  
By scars which his activity has left  
Beside our roads and pathways, though,  
thank Heaven !

This covert nook reports not of his hand)  
He who with pocket-hammer smites the  
edge

Of luckless rock or prominent stone, dis-  
guised

In weather-stains or crusted o'er by Nature  
With her first growths, detaching by the  
stroke

A chip or splinter—to resolve his doubts ;  
And, with that ready answer satisfied,  
The substance classes by some barbarous  
name,

And hurries on ; or from the fragments picks  
His specimen, if but haply interveined  
With sparkling mineral, or should crystal  
cube

Lurk in its cells—and thinks himself en-  
riched,

Wealthier, and doubtless wiser, than before !  
Intrusted safely each to his pursuit,  
Earnest alike, let both from hill to hill  
Range ; if it please them, speed from clime  
to clime ;

The mind is full—and free from pain their  
pastime."

" Then," said I, interposing, " One is  
near,

Who cannot but possess in your esteem  
Place worthier still of envy. May I name,  
Without offence, that fair-faced cottage-  
boy ?

Dame Nature's pupil of the lowest form,  
Youngest apprentice in the school of art !  
Him, as we entered from the open glen,  
You might have noticed, busily engaged,  
Heart, soul, and hands,—in mending the  
defects

Left in the fabric of a leaky dam  
Raised for enabling this penurious stream  
To turn a slender mill (that new-made  
plaything)

For his delight—the happiest he of all !"

" Far happiest," answered the despond-  
ing Man,

" If, such as now he is, he might remain !  
 Ah ! what avails imagination high  
 Or question deep ? what profits all that  
     earth,  
 Or heaven's blue vault, is suffered to put  
     forth  
 Of impulse or allurements, for the Soul  
 To quit the beaten track of life, and soar  
 Far as she finds a yielding element  
 In past or future ; far as she can go  
 Through time or space—if neither in the  
     one,  
 Nor in the other region, nor in aught  
 That Fancy, dreaming o'er the map of  
     things,  
 Hath placed beyond these penetrable  
     bounds,  
 Words of assurance can be heard ; if no-  
     where  
 A habitation, for consummate good,  
 Or for progressive virtue, by the search  
 Can be attained,—a better sanctuary  
 From doubt and sorrow, than the senseless  
     grave ? "

" Is this," the grey-haired Wanderer  
     mildly said,  
 " The voice, which we so lately overheard,  
 To that same child, addressing tenderly  
 The consolations of a hopeful mind ?  
 ' *His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.*'  
 These were your words ; and, verily, me-  
     thinks  
 Wisdom is oft-times nearer when we stoop  
 Than when we soar."—

The Other, not displeased,  
 Promptly replied—" My notion is the same.  
 And I, without reluctance, could decline  
 All act of inquisition whence we rise,  
 And what, when breath hath ceased, we  
     may become.  
 Here are we, in a bright and breathing  
     world.

Our origin, what matters it ? In lack  
 Of worthy explanation, say at once  
 With the American (a thought which suits  
 The place where now we stand) that certain  
     men

Leapt out together from a rocky cave ;  
 And these were the first parents of man-  
     kind :

Or, if a different image be recalled  
 By the warm sunshine, and the jocund voice  
 Of insects chirping out their careless lives

On these soft beds of thyme-besprinkled turf,  
 Choose, with the gay Athenian, a conceit  
 As sound—blithe race ! whose mantles were  
     bedecked

With golden grasshoppers, in sign that they  
 Had sprung, like those bright creatures,  
     from the soil

Whereon their endless generations dwell.  
 But stop !—these theoretic fancies jar  
 On serious minds : then, as the Hindoos  
     draw

Their holy Ganges from a skiey fount,  
 Even so deduce the stream of human life  
 From seats of power divine ; and hope, or  
     trust,

That our existence winds her stately course  
 Beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make part  
 Of a living ocean ; or, to sink engulfed,  
 Like Niger, in impenetrable sands  
 And utter darkness : thought which may be  
     faced,

Though comfortless !—

Not of myself I speak ;  
 Such acquiescence neither doth imply,  
 In me, a meekly-bending spirit soothed  
 By natural piety ; nor a lofty mind,  
 By philosophic discipline prepared  
 For calm subjection to acknowledged law ;  
 Pleased to have been, contented not to be.  
 Such palms I boast not ;—no ! to me, who  
     find

Reviewing my past way, much to condemn,  
 Little to praise, and nothing to regret,  
 (Save some remembrances of dream-like  
     joys

That scarcely seem to have belonged to me)  
 If I must take my choice between the pair  
 That rule alternately the weary hours,  
 Night is than day more acceptable ; sleep  
 Doth, in my estimate of good, appear  
 A better state than waking ; death than  
     sleep :

Feelingly sweet is stillness after storm,  
 Though under covert of the wormy ground !

Yet be it said, in justice to myself,  
 That in more genial times, when I was free  
 To explore the destiny of human kind  
 (Not as an intellectual game pursued  
 With curious subtilty, from wish to cheat  
 Irksome sensations ; but by love of truth  
 Urged on, or haply by intense delight  
 In feeding thought, wherever thought could  
     feed)



I did not rank with those (too dull or nice,  
For to my judgment such they then appeared,

Or too aspiring, thankless at the best)  
Who, in this frame of human life, perceive  
An object whereunto their souls are tied  
In discontented wedlock ; nor did e'er,  
From me, those dark impervious shades,  
that hang

Upon the region whither we are bound,  
Exclude a power to enjoy the vital beams  
Of present sunshine.—Deities that float  
On wings, angelic Spirits ! I could muse  
O'er what from eldest time we have been  
told

Of your bright forms and glorious faculties,  
And with the imagination rest content,  
Not wishing more ; repining not to tread  
The little sinuous path of earthly care,  
By flowers embellished, and by springs  
refreshed.

—' Blow winds of autumn !—let your chilling  
breath

' Take the live herbage from the mead, and  
strip

' The shady forest of its green attire,—

' And let the bursting clouds to fury rouse

' The gentle brooks !—Your desolating  
sway,

' Sheds,' I exclaimed, ' no sadness upon  
me,

' And no disorder in your rage I find.

' What dignity, what beauty, in this change

' From mild to angry, and from sad to gay,

' Alternate and revolving ! How benign ;

' How rich in animation and delight,

' How bountiful these elements—compared

' With aught, as more desirable and fair,

' Devised by fancy for the golden age ;

' Or the perpetual warbling that prevails

' In Arcady, beneath unaltered skies,

' Through the long year in constant quiet  
bound,

' Night hushed as night, and day serene as  
day !'

—But why this tedious record ?—Age, we  
know

Is garrulous ; and solitude is apt  
To anticipate the privilege of Age,  
From far ye come ; and surely with a hope  
Of better entertainment :—let us hence !"

Loth to forsake the spot, and still more  
loth

To be diverted from our present theme,  
I said, " My thoughts, agreeing, Sir, with  
yours,

Would push this censure farther ;—for, if  
smiles

Of scornful pity be the just reward  
Of Poesy thus courteously employed  
In framing models to improve the scheme  
Of Man's existence, and recast the world,  
Why should not grave Philosophy be styled,  
Herself, a dreamer of a kindred stock,  
A dreamer yet more spiritless and dull ?  
Yes, shall the fine immunities she boasts  
Establish sounder titles of esteem  
For her, who (all too timid and reserved  
For onset, for resistance too inert,  
Too weak for suffering, and for hope too  
tame)

Placed, among flowery gardens curtained  
round

With world-excluding groves, the brother-  
hood

Of soft Epicureans, taught—if they  
The ends of being would secure, and win  
The crown of wisdom—to yield up their  
souls

To a voluptuous unconcern, preferring  
Tranquillity to all things. Or is she,"  
I cried, " more worthy of regard, the  
Power,

Who, for the sake of sterner quiet, closed  
The Stoic's heart against the vain approach  
Of admiration, and all sense of joy ?"

His countenance gave notice that my zeal  
Accorded little with his present mind ;

I ceased, and he resumed.—" Ah ! gentle  
Sir,

Slight, if you will, the *means* ; but spare to  
slight

The *end* of those, who did, by system, rank,  
As the prime object of a wise man's aim,  
Security from shock of accident,  
Release from fear ; and cherished peaceful  
days

For their own sakes, as mortal life's chief  
good,

And only reasonable felicity.  
What motive drew, what impulse, I would  
ask,

Through a long course of later ages, drove,  
The hermit to his cell in forest wide ;  
Or what detained him, till his closing eyes  
Took their last farewell of the sun and stars,

Fast anchored in the desert?—Not alone  
 Dread of the persecuting sword, remorse,  
 Wrongs unredressed, or insults unavenged  
 And unavengeable, defeated pride,  
 Prosperity subverted, maddening want,  
 Friendship betrayed, affection unreturned,  
 Love with despair, or grief in agony;—  
 Not always from intolerable pangs  
 He fled; but, compassed round by pleasure,  
 sighed

For independent happiness; craving peace,  
 The central feeling of all happiness,  
 Not as a refuge from distress or pain,  
 A breathing-time, vacation, or a truce,  
 But for its absolute self; a life of peace,  
 Stability without regret or fear;  
 That hath been, is, and shall be ever-  
 more!—

Such the reward he sought; and wore out  
 life,

There, where on few external things his  
 heart

Was set, and those his own; or, if not his,  
 Subsisting under nature's steadfast law.

What other yearning was the master tie  
 Of the monastic brotherhood, upon rock  
 Aërial, or in green secluded vale,  
 One after one, collected from afar,  
 An undissolving fellowship?—What but  
 this,

The universal instinct of repose,  
 The longing for confirmed tranquillity,  
 Inward and outward; humble, yet sublime:  
 The life where hope and memory are as  
 one;

Where earth is quiet and her face un-  
 changed

Save by the simplest toil of human hands  
 Or seasons' difference; the immortal Soul  
 Consistent in self-rule; and heaven revealed  
 To meditation in that quietness!—

Such was their scheme: and though the  
 wished-for end

By multitudes was missed, perhaps attained  
 By none, they for the attempt, and pains  
 employed,

Do, in my present censure, stand redeemed  
 From the unqualified disdain, that once  
 Would have been cast upon them by my  
 voice

Delivering her decisions from the seat  
 Of forward youth—that scruples not to  
 solve

Doubts, and determine questions, by the  
 rules

Of inexperienced judgment, ever prone  
 To overweening faith; and is inflamed,  
 By courage, to demand from real life  
 The test of act and suffering, to provoke  
 Hostility—how dreadful when it comes,  
 Whether affliction be the foe, or guilt!

A child of earth, I rested, in that stage  
 Of my past course to which these thoughts  
 advert,

Upon earth's native energies; forgetting  
 That mine was a condition which required  
 Nor energy, nor fortitude—a calm  
 Without vicissitude; which, if the like  
 Had been presented to my view elsewhere,  
 I might have even been tempted to despise.  
 But no—for the serene was also bright;  
 Enlivened happiness with joy o'erflowing,  
 With joy, and—oh! that memory should  
 survive

To speak the word—with rapture! Nature's  
 boon,

Life's genuine inspiration, happiness  
 Above what rules can teach, or fancy feign;  
 Abused, as all possessions *are* abused  
 That are not prized according to their  
 worth.

And yet, what worth? what good is given  
 to men,

More solid than the gilded clouds of  
 heaven?

What joy more lasting than a vernal  
 flower?—

None! 'tis the general plaint of human kind  
 In solitude: and mutually addressed  
 From each to all, for wisdom's sake:—

This truth

The priest announces from his holy seat:  
 And, crowned with garlands in the summer  
 grove,

The poet fits it to his pensive lyre.  
 Yet, ere that final resting-place be gained,  
 Sharp contradictions may arise, by doom  
 Of this same life, compelling us to grieve  
 That the prosperities of love and joy  
 Should be permitted, oft-times, to endure  
 So long, and be at once cast down for ever.  
 Oh! tremble, ye, to whom hath been as-  
 signed

A course of days composing happy months,  
 And they as happy years; the present still  
 So like the past, and both so firm a pledge

Of a congenial future, that the wheels  
Of pleasure move without the aid of hope :  
For Mutability is Nature's bane ;  
And slighted Hope *will* be avenged ; and,  
when  
Ye need her favours, ye shall find her not ;  
But in her stead — fear — doubt — and  
agony !"

This was the bitter language of the heart :  
But, while he spake, look, gesture, tone of  
voice,

Though discomposed and vehement, were  
such

As skill and graceful nature might suggest  
To a proficient of the tragic scene  
Standing before the multitude, beset  
With dark events. Desirous to divert  
Or stem the current of the speaker's  
thoughts,

We signified a wish to leave that place  
Of stillness and close privacy, a nook  
That seemed for self-examination made ;  
Or, for confession, in the sinner's need,  
Hidden from all men's view. To our  
attempt

He yielded not ; but, pointing to a slope  
Of mossy turf defended from the sun,  
And on that couch inviting us to rest,  
Full on that tender-hearted Man he turned  
A serious eye, and his speech thus renewed.

"You never saw, your eyes did never  
look

On the bright form of Her whom once I  
loved :—

Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,  
A sound unknown to you ; else, honoured  
Friend !

Your heart had borne a pitiable share  
Of what I suffered, when I wept that loss,  
And suffer now, not seldom, from the  
thought

That I remember, and can weep no more.—  
Stripped as I am of all the golden fruit  
Of self-esteem ; and by the cutting blasts  
Of self-reproach familiarly assailed ;  
Yet would I not be of such wintry bareness  
But that some leaf of your regard should  
hang

Upon my naked branches :—lively thoughts  
Give birth, full often, to unguarded words ;  
I grieve that, in your presence, from my  
tongue

Too much of frailty hath already dropped ;  
But that too much demands still more.

You know,  
Revered Compatriot—and to you, kind Sir,  
(Not to be deemed a stranger, as you come  
Following the guidance of these welcome  
feet

To our secluded vale) it may be told—  
That my demerits did not sue in vain  
To One on whose mild radiance many gazed  
With hope, and all with pleasure. This  
fair Bride—

In the devotedness of youthful love,  
Preferring me to parents, and the choir  
Of gay companions, to the natal roof,  
And all known places and familiar sights  
(Resigned with sadness gently weighing  
down

Her trembling expectations, but no more  
Than did to her due honour, and to me  
Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime  
In what I had to build upon)—this Bride,  
Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led  
To a low cottage in a sunny bay,  
Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,  
And the sea breeze as innocently breathes,  
On Devon's leafy shores ;—a sheltered hold,  
In a soft clime encouraging the soil  
To a luxuriant bounty !—As our steps  
Approach the embowered abode—our  
chosen seat—

See, rooted in the earth, her kindly bed,  
The unendangered myrtle, decked with  
flowers,  
Before the threshold stands to welcome us !  
While, in the flowering myrtle's neighbour-  
hood,

Not overlooked but courting no regard,  
Those native plants, the holly and the yew,  
Gave modest intimation to the mind  
How willingly their aid they would unite  
With the green myrtle, to endear the hours  
Of winter, and protect that pleasant place.  
—Wild were the walks upon those lonely  
Downs,

Track leading into track ; how marked,  
how worn

Into bright verdure, between fern and gorse  
Winding away its never-ending line  
On their smooth surface, evidence was none ;  
But, there, lay open to our daily haunt,  
A range of unappropriated earth,  
Where youth's ambitious feet might move  
at large ;

Whence, unmolested wanderers, we beheld  
The shining giver of the day diffuse  
His brightness o'er a tract of sea and land  
Gay as our spirits, free as our desires ;  
As our enjoyments, boundless.—From  
those heights

We dropped, at pleasure, into sylvan  
combs ;

Where arbours of impenetrable shade,  
And mossy seats, detained us side by side,  
With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our  
hearts

' That all the grove and all the day was  
ours.'

O happy time ! still happier was at hand ;  
For Nature called my Partner to resign  
Her share in the pure freedom of that life,  
Enjoyed by us in common.—To my hope,  
To my heart's wish, my tender Mate  
became

The thankful captive of maternal bonds ;  
And those wild paths were left to me alone.  
There could I meditate on follies past ;  
And, like a weary voyager escaped  
From risk and hardship, inwardly retrace  
A course of vain delights and thoughtless  
guilt,

And self-indulgence—without shame pursued.

There, undisturbed, could think of and  
could thank

Her whose submissive spirit was to me  
Rule and restraint—my guardian—shall I  
say

That earthly Providence, whose guiding love  
Within a port of rest had lodged me safe ;  
Safe from temptation, and from danger far ?  
Strains followed of acknowledgment addressed

To an authority enthroned above  
The reach of sight ; from whom, as from  
their source

Proceed all visible ministers of good  
That walk the earth—Father of heaven  
and earth,

Father, and king, and judge, adored and  
feared !

These acts of mind, and memory, and  
heart,

And spirit—interrupted and relieved  
By observations transient as the glance  
Of flying sunbeams, or to the outward form  
Cleaving with power inherent and intense,

As the mute insect fixed upon the plant  
On whose soft leaves it hangs, and from  
whose cup

It draws its nourishment imperceptibly—  
Endeared my wanderings ; and the mother's  
kiss

And infant's smile awaited my return.

In privacy we dwelt, a wedded pair,  
Companions daily, often all day long ;  
Not placed by fortune within easy reach  
Of various intercourse, nor wishing aught  
Beyond the allowance of our own fire-side,  
The twain within our happy cottage born,  
Inmates, and heirs of our united love ;  
Graced mutually by difference of sex,  
And with no wider interval of time  
Between their several births than served  
for one

To establish something of a leader's sway ;  
Yet left them joined by sympathy in age ;  
Equals in pleasure, fellows in pursuit.  
On these two pillars rested as in air  
Our solitude.

It soothes me to perceive,  
Your courtesy withholds not from my  
words

Attentive audience. But, oh ! gentle  
Friends,

As times of quiet and unbroken peace,  
Though, for a nation, times of blessedness,  
Give back faint echoes from the historian's  
page ;

So, in the imperfect sounds of this dis-  
course,

Depressed I hear, how faithless is the voice  
Which those most blissful days reverberate.  
What special record can, or need, be given  
To rules and habits, whereby much was  
done,

But all within the sphere of little things ;  
Of humble, though, to us, important cares,  
And precious interests ? Smoothly did  
our life

Advance, swerving not from the path pre-  
scribed ;

Her annual, her diurnal, round alike  
Maintained with faithful care. And you  
divine

The worst effects that our condition saw  
If you imagine changes slowly wrought,  
And in their progress unperceivable ;  
Not wished for ; sometimes noticed with a  
sigh,

(Whate'er of good or lovely they might bring)  
Sighs of regret, for the familiar good  
And loveliness endeared which they removed.

Seven years of occupation undisturbed  
Established seemingly a right to hold  
That happiness; and use and habit gave,  
To what an alien spirit had acquired,  
A patrimonial sanctity. And thus,  
With thoughts and wishes bounded to this world,

I lived and breathed; most grateful—if to enjoy

Without repining or desire for more,  
For different lot, or change to higher sphere,  
(Only except some impulses of pride  
With no determined object, though upheld  
By theories with suitable support)—  
Most grateful, if in such wise to enjoy  
Be proof of gratitude for what we have;  
Else, I allow, most thankless.—But, at once,  
From some dark seat of fatal power was urged

A claim that shattered all.—Our blooming girl,

Caught in the gripe of death, with such brief time

To struggle in as scarcely would allow  
Her cheek to change its colour, was conveyed

From us to inaccessible worlds, to regions  
Where height, or depth, admits not the approach

Of living man, though longing to pursue.  
—With even as brief a warning—and how soon,

With what short interval of time between,  
I tremble yet to think of—our last prop,  
Our happy life's only remaining stay—  
The brother followed; and was seen no more!

Calm as a frozen lake when ruthless winds  
Blow fiercely, agitating earth and sky,  
The Mother now remained; as if in her,  
Who, to the lowest region of the soul,  
Had been erewhile unsettled and disturbed,  
This second visitation had no power  
To shake; but only to bind up and seal;  
And to establish thankfulness of heart  
In Heaven's determinations, ever just.  
The eminence whereon her spirit stood,

Mine was unable to attain. Immense  
The space that severed us! But, as the sight

Communicates with heaven's ethereal orbs  
Incalculably distant; so, I felt  
That consolation may descend from far  
(And that is intercourse, and union, too.)  
While, overcome with speechless gratitude,  
And, with a holier love inspired, I looked  
On her—at once superior to my woes  
And partner of my loss.—O heavy change,  
Dimness o'er this clear luminary crept  
Insensibly;—the immortal and divine  
Yielded to mortal reflux; her pure glory,  
As from the pinnacle of worldly state  
Wretched ambition drops astounded, fell  
Into a gulf obscure of silent grief,  
And keen heart-anguish—of itself ashamed,  
Yet obstinately cherishing itself:  
And, so consumed, she melted from my arms;  
And left me, on this earth, disconsolate!

What followed cannot be reviewed in thought;

Much less, retraced in words. If she, of life  
Blameless, so intimate with love and joy  
And all the tender motions of the soul,  
Had been supplanted, could I hope to stand—

Infirm, dependant, and now destitute?  
I called on dreams and visions, to disclose  
That which is veiled from waking thought;  
conjured

Eternity, as men constrain a ghost  
To appear and answer; to the grave I spake

Imploring;—looked up, and asked the Heavens

If Angels traversed their cerulean floors,  
If fixed or wandering star could tidings yield

Of the departed spirit—what abode  
It occupies—what consciousness retains  
Of former loves and interests. Then my soul  
Turned inward,—to examine of what stuff  
Time's fetters are composed; and life was put  
To inquisition, long and profitless!

By pain of heart—now checked—and now impelled—

The intellectual power, through words and things,

Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way!  
And from those transports, and these toils  
abstruse,

Some trace am I enabled to retain  
Of time, else lost;—existing unto me  
Only by records in myself not found.

From that abstraction. I was roused,—  
and how?

Even as a thoughtful shepherd by a flash  
Of lightning startled in a gloomy cave  
Of these wild hills. For, lo! the dread  
Bastile,

With all the chambers in its horrid towers,  
Fell to the ground:—by violence overthrown  
Of indignation; and with shouts that  
drowned

The crash it made in falling! From the  
wreck

A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,  
The appointed seat of equitable law  
And mild paternal sway. The potent  
shock

I felt: the transformation I perceived,  
As marvellously seized as in that moment  
When, from the blind mist issuing, I  
beheld

Glory—beyond all glory ever seen,  
Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,  
Dazzling the soul. Meanwhile, prophetic  
harps

In every grove were ringing, 'War shall  
cease;

'Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured?  
'Bring garlands, bring forth choicest  
flowers, to deck

'The tree of Liberty.'—My heart re-  
bounded;

My melancholy voice the chorus joined;

—'Be joyful all ye nations; in all lands,

'Ye that are capable of joy be glad!

'Henceforth, whate'er is wanting to your-  
selves

'In others ye shall promptly find;—and  
all,

'Enriched by mutual and reflected wealth,  
'Shall with one heart honour their common  
kind.'

Thus was I reconverted to the world;  
Society became my glittering bride,  
And airy hopes my children.—From the  
depths

Of natural passion, seemingly escaped,  
My soul diffused herself in wide embrace  
Of institutions, and the forms of things;  
As they exist, in mutable array,

Upon life's surface. What, though in my  
veins

There flowed no Gallic blood, nor had I  
breathed

The air of France, not less than Gallic  
zeal

Kindled and burnt among the sapless twigs  
Of my exhausted heart. If busy men  
In sober conclave met, to weave a web  
Of amity, whose living threads should  
stretch

Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,  
There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise  
And acclamation, crowds in open air  
Expressed the tumult of their minds, my  
voice

There mingled, heard or not. The powers  
of song

I left not uninvoked; and, in still groves,  
Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive lay  
Of thanks and expectation, in accord  
With their belief, I sang Saturnian rule  
Returned,—a progeny of golden years  
Permitted to descend, and bless mankind.  
—With promises the Hebrew Scriptures  
teem:

I felt their invitation; and resumed  
A long-suspended office in the House  
Of public worship, where, the glowing  
phrase

Of ancient inspiration serving me,  
I promised also,—with undaunted trust  
Foretold, and added prayer to prophecy;  
The admiration winning of the crowd;  
The help desiring of the pure devout.

Scorn and contempt forbid me to pro-  
ceed!

But History, time's slavish scribe, will tell  
How rapidly the zealots of the cause  
Disbanded—or in hostile ranks appeared;  
Some, tired of honest service; these, out-  
done,

Disgusted therefore, or appalled, by aims  
Of fiercer zealots—so confusion reigned,  
And the more faithful were compelled to  
exclaim,

As Brutus did to Virtue, 'Liberty,  
'I worshipped thee, and find thee but a  
Shade!'

Such recantation had for me no charm,  
Nor would I bend to it; who should have  
grieved

At aught, however fair, that bore the mien  
Of a conclusion, or catastrophe.

Why then conceal, that, when the simply  
good

In timid selfishness withdrew, I sought  
Other support, not scrupulous whence it  
came;

And, by what compromise it stood, not  
nice?

Enough if notions seemed to be high-  
pitched,

And qualities determined.—Among men  
So character'd did I maintain a strife  
Hopeless, and still more hopeless every  
hour;

But, in the process, I began to feel  
That, if the emancipation of the world  
Were missed, I should at least secure my  
own,

And be in part compensated. For rights,  
Widely—inveterately usurped upon,  
I spake with vehemence; and promptly  
seized

All that Abstraction furnished for my needs  
Or purposes; nor scrupled to proclaim,  
And propagate, by liberty of life,  
Those new persuasions. Not that I re-  
joiced,

Or even found pleasure, in such vagrant  
course,

For its own sake; but farthest from the  
walk

Which I had trod in happiness and peace,  
Was most inviting to a troubled mind;  
That, in a struggling and distempered  
world,

Saw a seductive image of herself.

Yet, mark the contradictions of which Man  
Is still the sport! Here Nature was my  
guide,

The Nature of the dissolute; but thee,  
O fostering Nature! I rejected—smiled

At others' tears in pity; and in scorn  
At those, which thy soft influence some-  
times drew

From my unguarded heart.—The tranquil  
shores

Of Britain circumscribed me; else, perhaps  
I might have been entangled among deeds,  
Which, now, as infamous, I should abhor—  
Despise, as senseless: for my spirit relished  
Strangely the exasperation of that Land,  
Which turned an angry beak against the  
down

Of her own breast; confounded into hope  
Of disencumbering thus her fretful wings.

But all was quieted by iron bonds  
Of military sway. The shifting aims,  
The moral interests, the creative might,  
The varied functions and high attributes  
Of civil action, yielded to a power  
Formal, and odious, and contemptible.  
—In Britain, ruled a panic dread of change;  
The weak were praised, rewarded, and ad-  
vanced;

And, from the impulse of a just disdain,  
Once more did I retire into myself.  
There feeling no contentment, I resolved  
To fly, for safeguard, to some foreign shore,  
Remote from Europe; from her blasted  
hopes;

Her fields of carnage, and polluted air.

Fresh blew the wind, when o'er the  
Atlantic Main

The ship went gliding with her thoughtless  
crew;

And who among them but an Exile, freed  
From discontent, indifferent, pleased to sit  
Among the busily-employed, not more  
With obligation charged, with service taxed,  
Than the loose pendant—to the idle wind  
Upon the tall mast streaming. But, ye  
Powers

Of soul and sense mysteriously allied,  
Oh, never let the Wretched, if a choice  
Be left him, trust the freight of his distress  
To a long voyage on the silent deep!  
For, like a plague, will memory break out;  
And, in the blank and solitude of things,  
Upon his spirit, with a fever's strength,  
Will conscience prey.—Feebly must they  
have felt

Who, in old time, attired with snakes and  
whips

The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards  
Were turned on me—the face of her I  
loved;

The Wife and Mother pitifully fixing  
Tender reproaches, insupportable!  
Where now that boasted liberty? No  
welcome

From unknown objects I received; and  
those,

Known and familiar, which the vaulted sky  
Did, in the placid clearness of the night,  
Disclose, had accusations to prefer

Against my peace. Within the cabin stood  
That volume—as a compass for the soul—  
Revered among the nations. I implored  
Its guidance; but the infallible support  
Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why re-  
fused

To One by storms annoyed and adverse  
winds;

Perplexed with currents; of his weakness  
sick;

Of vain endeavours tired; and by his own,  
And by his nature's, ignorance, dismayed!

Long-wished-for sight, the Western  
World appeared;

And, when the ship was moored, I leaped  
ashore

Indignantly—resolved to be a man,  
Who, having o'er the past no power, would  
live

No longer in subjection to the past,  
With abject mind—from a tyrannic lord  
Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured:  
So, like a fugitive, whose feet have cleared  
Some boundary, which his followers may  
not cross

In prosecution of their deadly chase,  
Respiring I looked round.—How bright  
the sun,

The breeze how soft! Can anything pro-  
duced

In the old World compare, thought I, for  
power

And majesty with this gigantic stream,  
Sprung from the desert? And behold a  
city

Fresh, youthful, and aspiring! What are  
these

To me, or I to them? As much at least  
As he desires that they should be, whom  
winds

And waves have wafted to this distant shore,  
In the condition of a damaged seed,  
Whose fibres cannot, if they would, take  
root.

Here may I roam at large;—my business is,  
Roaming at large, to observe, and not to  
feel,

And, therefore, not to act—convinced that  
all

Which bears the name of action, howsoever  
Beginning, ends in servitude—still painful,  
And mostly profitless. And, sooth to say,  
On nearer view, a motley spectacle

Appeared, of high pretensions,—unre-  
proved

But by the obstreperous voice of higher still;  
Big passions strutting on a petty stage;  
Which a detached spectator may regard  
Not unamused.—But ridicule demands  
Quick change of objects; and, to laugh  
alone,

At a composing distance from the haunts  
Of strife and folly, though it be a treat  
As choice as musing Leisure can bestow;  
Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,  
To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,  
How'er to airy Demons suitable,  
Of all unsocial courses, is least fit  
For the gross spirit of mankind,—the one  
That soonest fails to please, and quickest  
turns

Into vexation.

Let us, then, I said,

Leave this unknit Republic to the scourge  
Of her own passions; and to regions haste,  
Whose shades have never felt the encroach-  
ing axe,

Or soil endured a transfer in the mart  
Of dire rapacity. There, Man abides,  
Primeval Nature's child. A creature weak  
In combination, (wherefore else driven back  
So far, and of his old inheritance  
So easily deprived?) but, for that cause,  
More dignified, and stronger in himself;  
Whether to act, judge, suffer, or enjoy.  
True, the intelligence of social art  
Hath overpowered his forefathers, and soon  
Will sweep the remnant of his line away;  
But contemplations, worthier, nobler far  
Than her destructive energies, attend  
His independence, when along the side  
Of Mississippi, or that northern stream<sup>1</sup>  
That spreads into successive seas, he walks;  
Pleased to perceive his own unshackled life,  
And his innate capacities of soul,  
There imaged: or when, having gained the  
top

Of some commanding eminence, which yet  
Intruder ne'er beheld, he thence surveys  
Regions of wood and wide savannah, vast  
Expanse of unappropriated earth,  
With mind that sheds a light on what he  
sees;

Free as the sun, and lonely as the sun,  
Pouring above his head its radiance down  
Upon a living and rejoicing world!

<sup>1</sup> See Note.



So, westward, tow'rd the unviolated woods  
 I bent my way; and, roaming far and wide,  
 Failed not to greet the merry Mocking-bird;  
 And, while the melancholy Muscawiss  
 (The sportive bird's companion in the grove)  
 Repeated, o'er and o'er, his plaintive cry,  
 I sympathised at leisure with the sound;  
 But that pure archetype of human greatness,  
 I found him not. There, in his stead,  
 appeared

A creature, squalid, vengeful, and impure;  
 Remorseless, and submissive to no law  
 But superstitious fear, and abject sloth.

Enough is told! Here am I—ye have  
 heard

What evidence I seek, and vainly seek;  
 What from my fellow-beings I require,  
 And either they have not to give, or I  
 Lack virtue to receive; what I myself,  
 Too oft by wilful forfeiture, have lost  
 Nor can regain. How languidly I look  
 Upon this visible fabric of the world,  
 May be divined—perhaps it hath been  
 said:—

But spare your pity, if there be in me  
 Aught that deserves respect: for I exist,  
 Within myself, not comfortless.—The tenor  
 Which my life holds, he readily may conceive

Whoe'er hath stood to watch a mountain  
 brook

In some still passage of its course, and seen,  
 Within the depths of its capacious breast,  
 Inverted trees, rocks, clouds, and azure  
 sky;

And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam,  
 And conglobated bubbles undissolved,  
 Numerous as stars; that, by their onward  
 lapse,

Betray to sight the motion of the stream,  
 Else imperceptible. Meanwhile, is heard  
 A softened roar, or murmur; and the sound  
 Though soothing, and the little floating isles  
 Though beautiful, are both by Nature  
 charged

With the same pensive office; and make  
 known

Through what perplexing labyrinths, abrupt  
 Precipitations, and untoward straits,  
 The earth-born wanderer hath passed; and  
 quickly,

That respite o'er, like traverses and toils  
 Must he again encounter.—Such a stream

Is human Life; and so the Spirit fares  
 In the best quiet to her course allowed;  
 And such is mine,—save only for a hope  
 That my particular current soon will reach  
 The unfathomable gulf, where all is still!"

## BOOK FOURTH

### DESPONDENCY CORRECTED

#### ARGUMENT

State of feeling produced by the foregoing  
 Narrative—A belief in a superintending Providence the only adequate support under affliction  
 —Wanderer's ejaculation—Acknowledges the difficulty of a lively faith—Hence immoderate sorrow—Exhortations—How received—Wanderer applies his discourse to that other cause of dejection in the Solitary's mind—Disappointment from the French Revolution—States grounds of hope, and insists on the necessity of patience and fortitude with respect to the course of great revolutions—Knowledge the source of tranquillity—Rural Solitude favourable to knowledge of the inferior Creatures; Study of their habits and ways recommended; exhortation to bodily exertion and communion with Nature—Morbid Solitude pitiable—Superstition better than apathy—Apathy and destitution unknown in the infancy of society—The various modes of Religion prevented it—Illustrated in the Jewish, Persian, Babylonian, Chaldean, and Grecian modes of belief—Solitary interposes—Wanderer points out the influence of religious and imaginative feeling in the humble ranks of society, illustrated from present and past times—These principles tend to recall exploded superstitions and popery—Wanderer rebuts this charge, and contrasts the dignities of the Imagination with the presumptuous littleness of certain modern Philosophers—Recommends other lights and guides—Asserts the power of the soul to regenerate herself; Solitary asks how—Reply—Personal appeal—Exhortation to activity of body renewed—How to commune with Nature—Wanderer concludes with a legitimate union of the imagination, affections, understanding, and reason—Effect of his discourse—Evening; Return to the Cottage.

HERE closed the Tenant of that lonely vale  
 His mournful narrative—commenced in  
 pain,

In pain commenced, and ended without  
 peace:

Yet tempered, not unfrequently, with strains

Of native feeling, grateful to our minds ;  
And yielding surely some relief to his,  
While we sate listening with compassion  
due.

A pause of silence followed ; then, with  
voice

That did not falter though the heart was  
moved,

The Wanderer said :—

“ One adequate support

For the calamities of mortal life  
Exists—one only ; an assured belief  
That the procession of our fate, howe’er  
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being  
Of infinite benevolence and power ;  
Whose everlasting purposes embrace  
All accidents, converting them to good.  
—The darts of anguish *fix* not where the  
seat

Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified  
By acquiescence in the Will supreme  
For time and for eternity ; by faith,  
Faith absolute in God, including hope,  
And the defence that lies in boundless love  
Of his perfections ; with habitual dread  
Of aught unworthily conceived, endured  
Impatiently, ill-done, or left undone,  
To the dishonour of his holy name.  
Soul of our Souls, and safeguard of the  
world !

Sustain, thou only canst, the sick of heart ;  
Restore their languid spirits, and recall  
Their lost affections unto thee and thine ! ”

Then, as we issued from that covert nook,  
He thus continued, lifting up his eyes  
To heaven :—“ How beautiful this dome of  
sky ;

And the vast hills, in fluctuation fixed  
At thy command, how awful ! Shall the  
Soul,

Human and rational, report of thee  
Even less than these ?—Be mute who will,  
who can,

Yet I will praise thee with impassioned  
voice :

My lips, that may forget thee in the crowd,  
Cannot forget thee here ; where thou hast  
built,

For thy own glory, in the wilderness !  
Me didst thou constitute a priest of thine,  
In such a temple as we now behold  
Reared for thy presence : therefore, am I  
bound

To worship, here, and everywhere—as one  
Not doomed to ignorance, though forced to  
tread,

From childhood up, the ways of poverty ;  
From unreflecting ignorance preserved,  
And from debasement rescued.—By thy  
grace

The particle divine remained unquenched ;  
And, ‘mid the wild weeds of a rugged soil,  
Thy bounty caused to flourish deathless  
flowers,

From paradise transplanted : wintry age  
Impends ; the frost will gather round my  
heart ;

If the flowers wither, I am worse than  
dead !

—Come, labour, when the worn-out frame  
requires

Perpetual sabbath ; come, disease and want ;  
And sad exclusion through decay of sense ;  
But leave me unabated trust in thee—  
And let thy favour, to the end of life,  
Inspire me with ability to seek  
Repose and hope among eternal things—  
Father of heaven and earth ! and I am rich,  
And will possess my portion in content !

And what are things eternal ?—powers  
depart,”

The grey-haired Wanderer stedfastly re-  
plied,

Answering the question which himself had  
asked,

“ Possessions vanish, and opinions change,  
And passions hold a fluctuating seat :

But, by the storms of circumstance un-  
shaken,

And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,  
Duty exists ;—immutably survive,  
For our support, the measures and the  
forms,

Which an abstract intelligence supplies ;  
Whose kingdom is, where time and space  
are not.

Of other converse which mind, soul, and  
heart,

Do, with united urgency, require,  
What more that may not perish ?—Thou,  
dread source,

Prime, self-existing cause and end of all  
That in the scale of being fill their place ;  
Above our human region, or below,  
Set and sustained ;—thou, who didst wrap  
the cloud

Of infancy around us, that thyself,  
Therein, with our simplicity awhile  
Might'st hold, on earth, communion undis-  
turbed ;

Who from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,  
Or from its death-like void, with punctual  
care,

And touch as gentle as the morning light,  
Restor'st us, daily, to the powers of sense  
And reason's stedfast rule—thou, thou alone  
Art everlasting, and the blessed Spirits,  
Which thou includest, as the sea her waves :  
For adoration thou endur'st ; endure  
For consciousness the motions of thy will ;  
For apprehension those transcendent truths  
Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws  
(Submission constituting strength and power)  
Even to thy Being's infinite majesty !  
This universe shall pass away—a work  
Glorious ! because the shadow of thy might,  
A step, or link, for intercourse with thee.  
Ah ! if the time must come, in which my  
feet

No more shall stray where meditation leads,  
By flowing stream, through wood, or craggy  
wild,

Loved haunts like these ; the unimprisoned  
Mind

May yet have scope to range among her  
own,

Her thoughts, her images, her high desires.  
If the dear faculty of sight should fail,  
Still, it may be allowed me to remember  
What visionary powers of eye and soul  
In youth were mine ; when, stationed on  
the top

Of some huge hill—expectant, I beheld  
The sun rise up, from distant climes re-  
turned

Darkness to chase, and sleep ; and bring  
the day

His bounteous gift ! or saw him toward the  
deep

Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds  
Attended ; then, my spirit was entranced  
With joy exalted to beatitude ;  
The measure of my soul was filled with bliss,  
And holiest love ; as earth, sea, air, with  
light,

With pomp, with glory, with magnificence !

Those fervent raptures are for ever flown ;  
And, since their date, my soul hath under-  
gone

Change manifold, for better or for worse :  
Yet cease I not to struggle, and aspire  
Heavenward ; and chide the part of me that  
flags,

Through sinful choice ; or dread necessity  
On human nature from above imposed.

'Tis, by comparison, an easy task<sup>1</sup>  
Earth to despise ; but, to converse with  
heaven—

This is not easy :—to relinquish all  
We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,  
And stand in freedom loosened from this  
world,

I deem not arduous ; but must needs confess  
That 'tis a thing impossible to frame  
Conceptions equal to the soul's desires ;  
And the most difficult of tasks to *keep*  
Heights which the soul is competent to  
gain.

—Man is of dust : ethereal hopes are his,  
Which, when they should sustain themselves  
aloft,

Want due consistence ; like a pillar of  
smoke,

That with majestic energy from earth  
Rises ; but, having reached the thinner air,  
Melts, and dissolves, and is no longer seen.  
From this infirmity of mortal kind  
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not ; at  
least,

If grief be something hallowed and ordained,  
If, in proportion, it be just and meet,  
Yet, through this weakness of the general  
heart,

Is it enabled to maintain its hold  
In that excess which conscience disapproves.  
For who could sink and settle to that point  
Of selfishness ; so senseless who could be  
As long and perseveringly to mourn  
For any object of his love, removed  
From this unstable world, if he could fix  
A satisfying view upon that state  
Of pure, imperishable, blessedness,  
Which reason promises, and holy writ  
Ensures to all believers ?—Yet mistrust  
Is of such incapacity, methinks,  
No natural branch ; despondency far less ;  
And, least of all, is absolute despair.

—And, if there be whose tender frames  
have drooped

Even to the dust ; apparently, through  
weight

Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

An agonizing sorrow to transmute;  
Deem not that proof is here of hope with-  
held

When wanted most ; a confidence impaired  
So pitifully, that, having ceased to see  
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by  
love

Of what is lost, and perish through regret.  
Oh ! no, the innocent Sufferer often sees  
Too clearly ; feels too vividly ; and longs  
To realize the vision, with intense  
And over-constant yearning ;—there—there  
lies

The excess, by which the balance is de-  
stroyed.

Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,  
This vital warmth too cold, these visual  
orbs,

Though inconceivably endowed, too dim  
For any passion of the soul that leads  
To ecstasy ; and, all the crooked paths  
Of time and change disdaining, takes its  
course

Along the line of limitless desires.  
I, speaking now from such disorder free,  
Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled peace,  
I cannot doubt that they whom you deplore  
Are glorified ; or, if they sleep, shall wake  
From sleep, and dwell with God in endless  
love.

Hope, below this, consists not with belief  
In mercy, carried infinite degrees  
Beyond the tenderness of human hearts :  
Hope, below this, consists not with belief  
In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest power,  
That finds no limits but her own pure will.

Here then we rest ; not fearing for our  
creed  
The worst that human reasoning can  
achieve,

To unsettle or perplex it : yet with pain  
Acknowledging, and grievous self-reproach,  
That, though immovably convinced, we want

Zeal, and the virtue to exist by faith  
As soldiers live by courage ; as, by strength  
Of heart, the sailor fights with roaring  
seas.

Alas ! the endowment of immortal power<sup>1</sup>  
Is matched unequally with custom, time,  
And domineering faculties of sense  
In *all* ; in most, with superadded foes,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Idle temptations ; open vanities,  
Ephemeral offspring of the unblushing  
world ;

And, in the private regions of the mind,  
Ill-governed passions, ranklings of despoite,  
Immoderate wishes, pining discontent,  
Distress and care. What then remains ?—

To seek  
Those helps for his occasions ever near  
Who lacks not will to use them ; vows, re-  
newed

On the first motion of a holy thought ;  
Vigils of contemplation ; praise ; and  
prayer—

A stream, which, from the fountain of the  
heart

Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows  
Without access of unexpected strength.  
But, above all, the victory is most sure  
For him, who, seeking faith by virtue,  
strives

To yield entire submission to the law  
Of conscience—conscience revered and  
obeyed,

As God's most intimate presence in the  
soul,

And his most perfect image in the world.  
—Endeavour thus to live ; these rules re-  
gard ;

These helps solicit ; and a steadfast seat  
Shall then be yours among the happy few  
Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal  
air

Sons of the morning. For your nobler part,  
Ere disencumbered of her mortal chains,  
Doubt shall be quelled and trouble chased  
away ;

With only such degree of sadness left  
As may support longings of pure desire ;  
And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly  
In the sublime attractions of the grave."

While, in this strain, the venerable Sage  
Poured forth his aspirations, and announced  
His judgments, near that lonely house we  
paced

A plot of greensward, seemingly preserved  
By nature's care from wreck of scattered  
stones,

And from encroachment of encircling heath :  
Small space ! but, for reiterated steps,  
Smooth and commodious ; as a stately  
deck

Which to and fro the mariner is used

To tread for pastime, talking with his mates,  
Or haply thinking of far-distant friends,  
While the ship glides before a steady breeze.  
Stillness prevailed around us: and the voice  
That spake was capable to lift the soul  
Toward regions yet more tranquil. But,  
methought,

That he, whose fixed despondency had  
given

Impulse and motive to that strong discourse,  
Was less upraised in spirit than abashed;  
Shrinking from admonition, like a man  
Who feels that to exhort is to reproach.  
Yet not to be diverted from his aim,  
The Sage continued:—

“For that other loss,

The loss of confidence in social man,  
By the unexpected transports of our age  
Carried so high, that every thought, which  
looked

Beyond the temporal destiny of the Kind,  
To many seemed superfluous—as, no cause  
Could e’er for such exalted confidence  
Exist; so, none is now for fixed despair:  
The two extremes are equally disowned  
By reason: if, with sharp recoil, from one  
You have been driven far as its opposite,  
Between them seek the point whereon to  
build

Sound expectations. So doth he advise  
Who shared at first the illusion; but was  
soon

Cast from the pedestal of pride by shocks  
Which Nature gently gave, in woods and  
fields;

Nor unreprieved by Providence, thus speaking  
To the inattentive children of the world:

‘Vainglorious Generation! what new powers  
‘On you have been conferred? what gifts,  
withheld

‘From your progenitors, have ye received,

‘Fit recompense of new desert? what claim

‘Are ye prepared to urge, that my decrees

‘For you should undergo a sudden change;

‘And the weak functions of one busy day,

‘Reclaiming and extirpating, perform

‘What all the slowly-moving years of time,

‘With their united force, have left undone?

‘By nature’s gradual processes be taught;

‘By story be confounded! Ye aspire

‘Rashly, to fall once more; and that false  
fruit,

‘Which, to your overweening spirits, yields

‘Hope of a flight celestial, will produce

‘Misery and shame. But Wisdom of her  
sons

‘Shall not the less, though late, be justified.’

Such timely warning,” said the Wanderer,  
“gave

That visionary voice; and, at this day,  
When a Tartarean darkness overspreads  
The groaning nations; when the impious  
rule,

By will or by established ordinance,  
Their own dire agents, and constrain the  
good

To acts which they abhor; though I bewail  
This triumph, yet the pity of my heart  
Prevents me not from owning, that the  
law,

By which mankind now suffers, is most  
just.

For by superior energies; more strict  
Affiance in each other; faith more firm  
In their unhalloved principles; the bad  
Have fairly earned a victory o’er the weak,  
The vacillating, inconsistent good.

Therefore, not unconsoled, I wait—in hope  
To see the moment, when the righteous  
cause

Shall gain defenders zealous and devout  
As they who have opposed her; in which  
Virtue

Will, to her efforts, tolerate no bounds  
That are not lofty as her rights; aspiring  
By impulse of her own ethereal zeal.

That spirit only can redeem mankind;  
And when that sacred spirit shall appear,  
Then shall *our* triumph be complete as  
theirs.

Yet, should this confidence prove vain, the  
wise

Have still the keeping of their proper  
peace;

Are guardians of their own tranquillity.

They act, or they recede, observe, and  
feel;

‘Knowing the heart of man is set to be<sup>1</sup>  
The centre of this world, about the which  
Those revolutions of disturbances

Still roll; where all the aspects of misery  
Predominate; whose strong effects are such  
As he must bear, being powerless to  
redress;

*And that unless above himself he can  
Erect himself, how poor a thing is Man!’<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel.

Happy is he who lives to understand,  
Not human nature only, but explores  
All natures,—to the end that he may find  
The law that governs each; and where  
begins

The union, the partition where, that makes  
Kind and degree, among all visible Beings;  
The constitutions, powers, and faculties,  
Which they inherit,—cannot step be-  
yond,—

And cannot fall beneath; that do assign  
To every class its station and its office,  
Through all the mighty commonwealth of  
things

Up from the creeping plant to sovereign  
Man.

Such converse, if directed by a meek,  
Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love:  
For knowledge is delight; and such delight  
Breeds love: yet, suited as it rather is  
To thought and to the climbing intellect,  
It teaches less to love, than to adore;  
If that be not indeed the highest love!"

"Yet," said I, tempted here to inter-  
pose,

"The dignity of life is not impaired  
By aught that innocently satisfies  
The humbler cravings of the heart; and he  
Is a still happier man, who, for those  
heights

Of speculation not unfit, descends;  
And such benign affections cultivates  
Among the inferior kinds; not merely  
those

That he may call his own, and which de-  
pend,

As individual objects of regard,  
Upon his care, from whom he also looks  
For signs and tokens of a mutual bond;  
But others, far beyond this narrow sphere,  
Whom, for the very sake of love, he loves.  
Nor is it a mean praise of rural life  
And solitude, that they do favour most,  
Most frequently call forth, and best sustain,  
These pure sensations; that can penetrate  
The obstreperous city; on the barren seas  
Are not unfelt; and much might recom-  
mend,

How much they might inspirit and endear,  
The loneliness of this sublime retreat!"

"Yes," said the Sage, resuming the dis-  
course

Again directed to his downcast Friend,  
"If, with the froward will and grovelling  
soul

Of man, offended, liberty is here,  
And invitation every hour renewed,  
To mark *their* placid state, who never  
heard

Of a command which they have power to  
break,

Or rule which they are tempted to trans-  
gress:

These, with a soothed or elevated heart,  
May we behold; their knowledge register;  
Observe their ways; and, free from envy,  
find

Complacence there:—but wherefore this to  
you?

I guess that, welcome to your lonely hearth,  
The redbreast, ruffled up by winter's cold  
Into a 'feathery bunch,' feeds at your  
hand:

A box, perchance, is from your casement  
hung

For the small wren to build in;—not in  
vain,

The barriers disregarding that surround  
This deep abiding place, before your sight  
Mounts on the breeze the butterfly; and  
soars,

Small creature as she is, from earth's bright  
flowers,

Into the dewy clouds. Ambition reigns  
In the waste wilderness: the Soul ascends  
Drawn towards her native firmament of  
heaven,

When the fresh eagle, in the month of  
May,

Upborne, at evening, on replenished wing,  
This shaded valley leaves; and leaves the  
dark

Empurpled hills, conspicuously renewing  
A proud communication with the sun  
Low sunk beneath the horizon!—List!—I  
heard,

From yon huge breast of rock, a voice sent  
forth

As if the visible mountain made the cry.  
Again!"—The effect upon the soul was  
such

As he expressed: from out the mountain's  
heart

The solemn voice appeared to issue, start-  
ling

The blank air—for the region all around

Stood empty of all shape of life, and silent  
Save for that single cry, the unanswered  
bleat

Of a poor lamb—left somewhere to itself,  
The plaintive spirit of the solitude!  
He paused, as if unwilling to proceed,  
Through consciousness that silence in such  
place

Was best, the most affecting eloquence.  
But soon his thoughts returned upon them-  
selves,

And, in soft tone of speech, thus he re-  
sumed.

“Ah! if the heart, too confidently raised,  
Perchance too lightly occupied, or lulled  
Too easily, despise or overlook  
The vassalage that binds her to the earth,  
Her sad dependence upon time, and all  
The trepidations of mortality,  
What place so destitute and void—but  
there

The little flower her vanity shall check;  
The trailing worm reprove her thoughtless  
pride?

These craggy regions, these chaotic  
wilds,  
Does that benignity pervade, that warms  
The mole contented with her darksome  
walk

In the cold ground; and to the emmet  
gives

Her foresight, and intelligence that makes  
The tiny creatures strong by social league;  
Supports the generations, multiplies  
Their tribes, till we behold a spacious plain  
Or grassy bottom, all, with little hills—  
Their labour, covered, as a lake with  
waves;

Thousands of cities, in the desert place  
Built up of life, and food, and means of  
life!

Nor wanting here, to entertain the thought,  
Creatures that in communities exist,  
Less, as might seem, for general guardian-  
ship

Or through dependence upon mutual aid,  
Than by participation of delight  
And a strict love of fellowship, combined.  
What other spirit can it be that prompts  
The gilded summer flies to mix and weave  
Their sports together in the solar beam,  
Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy?

More obviously the self-same influence rules  
The feathered kinds; the fieldfare's pensive  
flock,

The cawing rooks, and sea-mews from afar,  
Hovering above these inland solitudes,  
By the rough wind unscattered, at whose  
call

Up through the trenches of the long-drawn  
vales

Their voyage was begun: nor is its power  
Unfelt among the sedentary fowl  
That seek yon pool, and there prolong  
their stay

In silent congress; or together roused  
Take flight; while with their clang the air  
resounds:

And, over all, in that ethereal vault,  
Is the mute company of changeful clouds;  
Bright apparition, suddenly put forth,  
The rainbow smiling on the faded storm;  
The mild assemblage of the starry heavens;  
And the great sun, earth's universal lord!

How bountiful is Nature! he shall find  
Who seeks not; and to him, who hath not  
asked,

Large measure shall be dealt. Three sab-  
bath-days

Are scarcely told, since, on a service bent  
Of mere humanity, you clomb those heights;  
And what a marvellous and heavenly show  
Was suddenly revealed!—the swains moved  
on,

And heeded not: you lingered, you per-  
ceived

And felt, deeply as living man could feel.  
There is a luxury in self-dispraise;  
And inward self-disparagement affords  
To meditative spleen a grateful feast.

Trust me, pronouncing on your own desert,  
You judge unthankfully: distempered nerves  
Infect the thoughts: the languor of the  
frame

Depresses the soul's vigour. Quit your  
couch—

Cleave not so fondly to your moody cell;  
Nor let the hallowed powers, that shed  
from heaven

Stillness and rest, with disapproving eye  
Look down upon your taper, through a  
watch

Of midnight hours, unseasonably twinkling  
In this deep Hollow, like a sullen star  
Dimly reflected in a lonely pool.

Take courage, and withdraw yourself from  
ways

That run not parallel to nature's course.  
Rise with the lark! your matins shall obtain  
Grace, be their composition what it may,  
If but with hers performed; climb once  
again,

Climb every day, those ramparts; meet  
the breeze

Upon their tops, adventurous as a bee  
That from your garden thither soars, to  
feed

On new-blown heath; let yon commanding  
rock

Be your frequented watch-tower; roll the  
stone

In thunder down the mountains; with all  
your might

Chase the wild goat; and if the bold red  
deer

Fly to those harbours, driven by hound  
and horn

Loud echoing, add your speed to the pur-  
suit;

So, wearied to your hut shall you return,  
And sink at evening into sound repose."

The Solitary lifted toward the hills  
A kindling eye :—accordant feelings rushed  
Into my bosom, whence these words broke  
forth :

"Oh! what a joy it were, in vigorous  
health,

To have a body (this our vital frame  
With shrinking sensibility endued,  
And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)  
And to the elements surrender it

As if it were a spirit !—How divine,  
The liberty, for frail, for mortal, man  
To roam at large among unpeopled glens  
And mountainous retirements, only trod  
By devious footsteps; regions consecrate  
To oldest time! and, reckless of the storm  
That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,  
Be as a presence or a motion—one  
Among the many there; and while the mists  
Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes  
And phantoms from the crags and solid  
earth

As fast as a musician scatters sounds  
Out of an instrument; and while the  
streams

(As at a first creation and in haste  
To exercise their untried faculties)

Descending from the region of the clouds,  
And starting from the hollows of the earth  
More multitudinous every moment, rend  
Their way before them—what a joy to roam  
An equal among mightiest energies;  
And haply sometimes with articulate voice,  
Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely heard  
By him that utters it, exclaim aloud,  
'Rage on ye elements! let moon and stars  
Their aspects lend, and mingle in their turn  
With this commotion (ruinous though it be)  
From day to night, from night to day, pro-  
longed!'"

"Yes," said the Wanderer, taking from  
my lips

The strain of transport, "whoso'er in  
youth

Has, through ambition of his soul, given  
way

To such desires, and grasped at such  
delight,

Shall feel congenial stirrings late and long,  
In spite of all the weakness that life brings,  
Its cares and sorrows; he, though taught  
to own

The tranquillizing power of time, shall  
wake,

Wake sometimes to a noble restlessness—  
Loving the sports which once he gloried in.

Compatriot, Friend, remote are Garry's  
hills,

The streams far distant of your native glen;  
Yet is their form and image here expressed  
With brotherly resemblance. Turn your  
steps

Wherever fancy leads; by day, by night,  
Are various engines working, not the same  
As those with which your soul in youth was  
moved,

But by the great Artificer endowed  
With no inferior power. You dwell alone;  
You walk, you live, you speculate alone;  
Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign  
prince,

For you a stately gallery maintain  
Of gay or tragic pictures. You have seen,  
Have acted, suffered, travelled far, observed  
With no incurious eye; and books are  
yours,

Within whose silent chambers treasure lies  
Preserved from age to age; more precious  
far



Than that accumulated store of gold  
And orient gems, which, for a day of need,  
The Sultan hides deep in ancestral tombs.  
These hoards of truth you can unlock at  
will :

And music waits upon your skilful touch,  
Sounds which the wandering shepherd from  
these heights

Hears, and forgets his purpose ;—furnished  
thus,

How can you droop, if willing to be up-  
raised ?

A piteous lot it were to flee from Man—  
Yet not rejoice in Nature. He, whose  
hours

Are by domestic pleasures uncared  
And unenlivened ; who exists whole years  
Apart from benefits received or done  
'Mid the transactions of the bustling crowd ;  
Who neither hears, nor feels a wish to hear,  
Of the world's interests—such a one hath  
need

Of a quick fancy, and an active heart,  
That, for the day's consumption, books  
may yield

Food not unwholesome ; earth and air  
correct

His morbid humour, with delight supplied  
Or solace, varying as the seasons change.  
—Truth has her pleasure-grounds, her  
haunts of ease

And easy contemplation ; gay parterres,  
And labyrinthine walks, her sunny glades  
And shady groves in studied contrast—each,  
For recreation, leading into each :  
These may he range, if willing to partake  
Their soft indulgences, and in due time  
May issue thence, recruited for the tasks  
And course of service Truth requires from  
those

Who tend her altars, wait upon her throne,  
And guard her fortresses. Who thinks,  
and feels,

And recognises ever and anon  
The breeze of nature stirring in his soul,  
Why need such man go desperately astray,  
And nurse ' the dreadful appetite of death ?'  
If tired with systems, each in its degree  
Substantial, and all crumbling in their turn,  
Let him build systems of his own, and smile  
At the fond work, demolished with a touch ;  
If unreligious, let him be at once,  
Among ten thousand innocents, enrolled

A pupil in the many-chambered school,  
Where superstition weaves her airy dreams.

Life's autumn past, I stand on winter's  
verge ;

And daily lose what I desire to keep :  
Yet rather would I instantly decline  
To the traditionary sympathies  
Of a most rustic ignorance, and take  
A fearful apprehension from the owl  
Or death-watch : and as readily rejoice,  
If two auspicious magpies crossed my  
way ;—

To this would rather bend than see and  
hear

The repetitions wearisome of sense,  
Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no  
place ;

Where knowledge, ill begun in cold remark  
On outward things, with formal inference  
ends ;

Or, if the mind turn inward, she recoils  
At once—or, not recoiling, is perplexed—  
Lost in a gloom of uninspired research ;  
Meanwhile, the heart within the heart, the  
seat

Where peace and happy consciousness  
should dwell,

On its own axis restlessly revolving,  
Seeks, yet can nowhere find, the light of  
truth.

Upon the breast of new-created earth  
Man walked ; and when and wheresoe'er he  
moved,

Alone or mated, solitude was not.  
He heard, borne on the wind, the articulate  
voice

Of God ; and Angels to his sight appeared  
Crowning the glorious hills of paradise ;  
Or through the groves gliding like morning  
mist

Enkindled by the sun. He sate—and  
talked

With winged Messengers ; who daily  
brought

To his small island in the ethereal deep  
Tidings of joy and love.—From those pure  
heights

(Whether of actual vision, sensible  
To sight and feeling, or that in this sort  
Have condescendingly been shadowed forth  
Communications spiritually maintained,  
And intuitions moral and divine)

Fell Human-kind—to banishment con-  
demned  
That flowing years repealed not : and  
distress  
And grief spread wide ; but Man escaped  
the doom  
Of destitution ;—solitude was not.  
—Jehovah—shapeless Power above all  
Powers,  
Single and one, the omnipresent God,  
By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,  
Or cloud of darkness, localised in heaven ;  
On earth, enshrined within the wandering  
ark ;  
Or, out of Sion, thundering from his  
throne  
Between the Cherubim—on the chosen  
Race  
Showered miracles, and ceased not to dis-  
pense  
Judgments, that filled the land from age to  
age  
With hope, and love, and gratitude, and  
fear ;  
And with amazement smote ;—thereby to  
assert  
His scorned, or unacknowledged, sover-  
eignty.  
And when the One, ineffable of name,  
Of nature indivisible, withdrew  
From mortal adoration or regard,  
Not then was Deity engulfed ; nor Man,  
The rational creature, left, to feel the  
weight  
Of his own reason, without sense or thought  
Of higher reason and a purer will,  
To benefit and bless, through mightier  
power :—  
Whether the Persian—zealous to reject  
Altar and image, and the inclusive walls  
And roofs of temples built by human  
hands—  
To loftiest heights ascending, from their  
tops,  
With myrtle-wreathed tiara on his brow,  
Presented sacrifice to moon and stars,  
And to the winds and mother elements,  
And the whole circle of the heavens, for  
him  
A sensitive existence, and a God,  
With lifted hands invoked, and songs of  
praise :  
Or, less reluctantly to bonds of sense  
Yielding his soul, the Babylonian framed

For influence undefined a personal shape ;  
And, from the plain, with toil immense,  
upreared  
Tower eight times planted on the top of  
tower,  
That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch  
Descending, there might rest ; upon that  
height  
Pure and serene, diffused—to overlook  
Winding Euphrates, and the city vast  
Of his devoted worshippers, far-stretched,  
With grove and field and garden inter-  
persed ;  
Their town, and foodful region for support  
Against the pressure of beleaguering war.

Chaldean Shepherds, ranging trackless  
fields,  
Beneath the concave of unclouded skies  
Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude,  
Looked on the polar star, as on a guide  
And guardian of their course, that never  
closed  
His stedfast eye. The planetary Five  
With a submissive reverence they beheld ;  
Watched, from the centre of their sleeping  
flocks,  
Those radiant Mercuries, that seemed to  
move  
Carrying through ether, in perpetual  
round,  
Decrees and resolutions of the Gods ;  
And, by their aspects, signifying works  
Of dim futurity, to Man revealed.  
—The imaginative faculty was lord  
Of observations natural ; and, thus  
Led on, those shepherds made report of  
stars  
In set rotation passing to and fro,  
Between the orbs of our apparent sphere  
And its invisible counterpart, adorned  
With answering constellations, under earth,  
Removed from all approach of living sight  
But present to the dead ; who, so they  
deemed,  
Like those celestial messengers beheld  
All accidents, and judges were of all.

The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,  
Rivers and fertile plains, and sounding  
shores,—  
Under a cope of sky more variable,  
Could find commodious place for every God,  
Promptly received, as prodigally brought,

From the surrounding countries, at the choice

Of all adventurers. With unrivalled skill,  
As nicest observation furnished hints  
For studious fancy, his quick hand bestowed  
On fluent operations a fixed shape;  
Metal or stone, idolatrously served,  
And yet—triumphant o'er this pompous show

Of art, this palpable array of sense,  
On every side encountered; in despite  
Of the gross fictions chanted in the streets  
By wandering Rhapsodists; and in contempt  
Of doubt and bold denial hourly urged  
Amid the wrangling schools—a SPIRIT hung,  
Beautiful region! o'er thy towns and farms,  
Statues and temples, and memorial tombs;  
And emanations were perceived; and acts  
Of immortality, in Nature's course,  
Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt  
As bonds, on grave philosopher imposed  
And armed warrior; and in every grove  
A gay or pensive tenderness prevailed,  
When piety more awful had relaxed.  
—'Take, running river, take these locks of mine'—

Thus would the Votary say—'this severed hair,

'My vow fulfilling, do I here present,  
'Thankful for my beloved child's return.  
'Thy banks, Cephissus, he again hath trod,  
'Thy murmurs heard; and drunk the crystal lymph

'With which thou dost refresh the thirsty lip,  
'And, all day long, moisten these flowery fields!'

And doubtless, sometimes, when the hair was shed

Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose  
Of Life continuous, Being unimpaired;  
That hath been, is, and where it was and is  
There shall endure,—existence unexposed  
To the blind walk of mortal accident;  
From diminution safe and weakening age;  
While man grows old, and dwindles, and decays;

And countless generations of mankind  
Depart; and leave no vestige where they trod.

We live by Admiration, Hope and Love;  
And, even as these are well and wisely fixed,  
In dignity of being we ascend.

But what is error?"—"Answer he who can!"

The Sceptic somewhat haughtily exclaimed:  
"Love, Hope, and Admiration,—are they not

Mad Fancy's favourite vassals? Does not life

Use them, full oft, as pioneers to ruin,  
Guides to destruction? Is it well to trust  
Imagination's light when reason's fails,  
The unguarded taper where the guarded faints?

—Stoop from those heights, and soberly declare

What error is; and, of our errors, which  
Doth most debase the mind; the genuine seats

Of power, where are they? Who shall regulate,

With truth, the scale of intellectual rank?"

"Methinks," persuasively the Sage replied,

"That for this arduous office you possess  
Some rare advantages. Your early days  
A grateful recollection must supply  
Of much exalted good by Heaven vouchsafed

To dignify the humblest state.—Your voice  
Hath, in my hearing, often testified  
That poor men's children, they, and they alone,

By their condition taught, can understand  
The wisdom of the prayer that daily asks  
For daily bread. A consciousness is yours  
How feelingly religion may be learned  
In smoky cabins, from a mother's tongue—  
Heard where the dwelling vibrates to the din

Of the contiguous torrent, gathering strength  
At every moment—and, with strength, increase

Of fury; or, while snow is at the door,  
Assaulting and defending, and the wind,  
A sightless labourer, whistles at his work—  
Fearful; but resignation tempers fear,  
And piety is sweet to infant minds.

—The Shepherd-lad, that in the sunshine carves,

On the green turf, a dial—to divide  
The silent hours; and who to that report  
Can portion out his pleasures, and adapt,  
Throughout a long and lonely summer's day

His round of pastoral duties, is not left  
With less intelligence for *moral* things  
Of gravest import. Early he perceives,  
Within himself, a measure and a rule,  
Which to the sun of truth he can apply,  
That shines for him, and shines for all  
mankind.

Experience daily fixing his regards  
On nature's wants, he knows how few they  
are,  
And where they lie, how answered and  
appeased.

This knowledge ample recompense affords  
For manifold privations; he refers  
His notions to this standard; on this rock  
Rests his desires; and hence, in after life,  
Soul-strengthening patience, and sublime  
content.

Imagination—not permitted here  
To waste her powers, as in the worldling's  
mind,

On fickle pleasures, and superfluous cares,  
And trivial ostentation—is left free  
And puissant to range the solemn walks  
Of time and nature, girded by a zone  
That, while it binds, invigorates and  
supports.

Acknowledge, then, that whether by the  
side

Of his poor hut, or on the mountain top,  
Or in the cultured field, a Man so bred  
(Take from him what you will upon the  
score

Of ignorance or illusion) lives and breathes  
For noble purposes of mind: his heart  
Beats to the heroic song of ancient days;  
His eye distinguishes, his soul creates.  
And those illusions, which excite the scorn  
Or move the pity of unthinking minds,  
Are they not mainly outward ministers  
Of inward conscience? with whose service  
charged

They came and go, appeared and dis-  
appear,

Diverting evil purposes, remorse  
Awakening, chastening an intemperate  
grief,

Or pride of heart abating: and, when'er  
For less important ends those phantoms  
move,

Who would forbid them, if their presence  
serve—

On thinly-peopled mountains and wild  
heaths,

Filling a space, else vacant—to exalt  
The forms of Nature, and enlarge her  
powers?

Once more to distant ages of the world  
Let us revert, and place before our thoughts  
The face which rural solitude might wear  
To the unenlightened swains of pagan  
Greece.

—In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman,  
stretched

On the soft grass through half a summer's  
day,

With music lulled his indolent repose:  
And, in some fit of weariness, if he,  
When his own breath was silent, chanced  
to hear

A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds  
Which his poor skill could make, his fancy  
fetched,

Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,  
A beardless Youth, who touched a golden  
lute,

And filled the illumined groves with ravish-  
ment.

The nightly hunter, lifting a bright eye  
Up towards the crescent moon, with grate-  
ful heart

Called on the lovely wanderer who bestowed  
That timely light, to share his joyous sport:  
And hence, a beaming Goddess with her  
Nymphs,

Across the lawn and through the darksome  
grove,

Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes  
By echo multiplied from rock or cave,  
Swept in the storm of chase; as moon and  
stars

Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven,  
When winds are blowing strong. The  
traveller slaked

His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and  
thanked

The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant hills  
Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,  
Might, with small help from fancy, be  
transformed

Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.  
The Zephyrs fanning, as they passed, their  
wings,

Lacked not, for love, fair objects whom  
they wooed

With gentle whisper. Withered boughs  
grotesque,

Stripped of their leaves and twigs by hoary  
age,  
From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth  
In the low vale, or on steep mountain side;  
And, sometimes, intermixed with stirring  
horns  
Of the live deer, or goat's depending  
beard,—  
These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild brood  
Of gamesome Deities; or Pan himself,  
The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring God!"

The strain was aptly chosen; and I  
: could mark  
Its kindly influence, o'er the yielding brow  
Of our Companion, gradually diffused;  
While, listening, he had paced the noise-  
less turf,  
Like one whose untired ear a murmuring  
stream  
Detains; but tempted now to interpose,  
He with a smile exclaimed:—

"'Tis well you speak  
At a safe distance from our native land,  
And from the mansions where our youth  
was taught.

The true descendants of those godly men  
Who swept from Scotland, in a flame of  
zeal,

Shrine, altar, image, and the massy piles  
That harboured them,—the souls retaining  
yet

The churlish features of that after-race  
Who fled to woods, caverns, and jutting  
rocks,

In deadly scorn of superstitious rites,  
Or what their scruples construed to be  
such—

How, think you, would they tolerate this  
scheme

Of fine propensities, that tends, if urged  
Far as it might be urged, to sow afresh  
The weeds of Romish phantasy, in vain  
Uprooted; would re-consecrate our wells  
To good Saint Fillan and to fair Saint

Anne;  
And from long banishment recall Saint  
Giles,

To watch again with tutelary love  
O'er stately Edinborough throned on crags?  
A blessed restoration, to behold  
The patron, on the shoulders of his priests,  
Once more parading through her crowded  
streets,

Now simply guarded by the sober powers  
Of science, and philosophy, and sense!"

This answer followed.—"You have  
turned my thoughts

Upon our brave Progenitors, who rose  
Against idolatry with warlike mind,  
And shrunk from vain observances, to lurk  
In woods, and dwell under impending rocks  
Ill-sheltered, and oft wanting fire and food;  
Why?—for this very reason that they felt,  
And did acknowledge, wheresoe'er they  
moved,

A spiritual presence, oft-times misconceived,  
But still a high dependence, a divine  
Bounty and government, that filled their  
hearts

With joy, and gratitude, and fear, and  
love;

And from their fervent lips drew hymns of  
praise,

That through the desert rang. Though  
favoured less,

Far less, than these, yet such, in their degree,  
Were those bewildered Pagans of old time.  
Beyond their own poor natures and above  
They looked; were humbly thankful for  
the good

Which the warm sun solicited, and earth  
Bestowed; were gladsome,—and their  
moral sense

They fortified with reverence for the Gods;  
And they had hopes that overstepped the  
Grave.

Now, shall our great Discoverers," he  
exclaimed,

Raising his voice triumphantly, "obtain  
From sense and reason, less than these  
obtained,

Though far misled? Shall men for whom  
our age

Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,  
To explore the world without and world  
within,

Be joyless as the blind? Ambitious spirits—  
Whom earth, at this late season, hath  
produced

To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh  
The planets in the hollow of their hand;

And they who rather dive than soar, whose  
pains

Have solved the elements, or analysed  
The thinking principle—shall they in fact

Prove a degraded Race? and what avails  
Renown, if their presumption make them  
such?

Oh! there is laughter at their work in  
heaven!

Inquire of ancient Wisdom; go, demand  
Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant  
That we should pry far off yet be unraised;  
That we should pore, and dwindle as we  
pore,

Viewing all objects unremittingly  
In disconnection dead and spiritless;  
And still dividing, and dividing still,  
Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied  
With the perverse attempt, while littleness  
May yet become more little; waging thus  
An impious warfare with the very life  
Of our own souls!

And if indeed there be  
An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom  
Our dark foundations rest, could he design  
That this magnificent effect of power,  
The earth we tread, the sky that we behold  
By day, and all the pomp which night  
reveals;

That these—and that superior mystery  
Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,  
And the dread soul within it—should exist  
Only to be examined, pondered, searched,  
Probed, vexed, and criticised? Accuse me  
not

Of arrogance, unknown Wanderer as I am,  
If, having walked with Nature threescore  
years,

And offered, far as frailty would allow,  
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,  
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,  
Whom I have served, that their DIVINITY  
Revolts, offended at the ways of men  
Swayed by such motives, to such ends  
employed;

Philosophers, who, though the human soul  
Be of a thousand faculties composed,  
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet  
prize

This soul, and the transcendent universe,  
No more than as a mirror that reflects  
To proud Self-love her own intelligence;  
That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss  
Of infinite Being, twinkling restlessly!

Nor higher place can be assigned to him  
And his compeers—the laughing Sage of  
France.—

Crowned was he, if my memory do not  
err,

With laurel planted upon hoary hairs,  
In sign of conquest by his wit achieved  
And benefits his wisdom had conferred;  
His stooping body tottered with wreaths of  
flowers

Opprest, far less becoming ornaments  
Than Spring oft twines about a mouldering  
tree;

Yet so it pleased a fond, a vain, old Man,  
And a most frivolous people. Him I mean  
Who penned, to ridicule confiding faith,  
This sorry Legend; which by chance we  
found

Piled in a nook, through malice, as might  
seem,

Among more innocent rubbish."—Speaking  
thus,

With a brief notice when, and how, and  
where,

We had espied the book, he drew it forth;  
And courteously, as if the act removed,  
At once, all traces from the good Man's  
heart

Of unbenign aversion or contempt,  
Restored it to its owner. "Gentle Friend,"  
Herewith he grasped the Solitary's hand,  
"You have known lights and guides better  
than these.

Ah! let not aught amiss within dispose  
A noble mind to practise on herself,  
And tempt opinion to support the wrongs  
Of passion: whatsoe'er be felt or feared,  
From higher judgment-seats make no  
appeal

To lower: can you question that the soul  
Inherits an allegiance, not by choice  
To be cast off, upon an oath proposed  
By each new upstart notion? In the ports  
Of levity no refuge can be found,  
No shelter, for a spirit in distress.  
He, who by wilful disesteem of life  
And proud insensibility to hope,  
Affronts the eye of Solitude, shall learn  
That her mild nature can be terrible;  
That neither she nor Silence lack the power  
To avenge their own insulted majesty.

O blest seclusion! when the mind admits  
The law of duty; and can therefore move  
Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,  
Linked in entire complacency with her  
choice;

When youth's presumptuousness is mellowed down,

And manhood's vain anxiety dismissed ;  
When wisdom shows her seasonable fruit,  
Upon the boughs of sheltering leisure hung  
In sober plenty ; when the spirit stoops  
To drink with gratitude the crystal stream  
Of unreprieved enjoyment ; and is pleased  
To muse, and be saluted by the air  
Of meek repentance, wafting wall-flower  
scents

From out the crumbling ruins of fallen  
pride

And chambers of transgression, now forlorn.  
O, calm contented days, and peaceful  
nights !

Who, when such good can be obtained,  
would strive

To reconcile his manhood to a couch  
Soft, as may seem, but, under that disguise,  
Stuffed with the thorny substance of the  
past

For fixed annoyance ; and full oft beset  
With floating dreams, black and discon-  
solate,

The vapoury phantoms of futurity ?

Within the soul a faculty abides,  
That with interpositions, which would hide  
And darken, so can deal that they become  
Contingencies of pomp ; and serve to exalt  
Her native brightness. As the ample moon,  
In the deep stillness of a summer even  
Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,  
Burns, like an unconsuming fire of light,  
In the green trees ; and, kindling on all  
sides

Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil  
Into a substance glorious as her own,  
Yea, with her own incorporated, by power  
Capacious and serene. Like power abides  
In man's celestial spirit ; virtue thus  
Sets forth and magnifies herself ; thus feeds  
A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,  
From the encumbrances of mortal life,  
From error, disappointment—nay, from  
guilt ;

And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,  
From palpable oppressions of despair."

The Solitary by these words was touched  
With manifest emotion, and exclaimed ;

"But how begin? and whence?—'The  
Mind is free—

Resolve,' the haughty Moralist would say,  
'This single act is all that we demand.'

Alas! such wisdom bids a creature fly  
Whose very sorrow is, that time hath shorn  
His natural wings!—To friendship let him  
turn

For succour ; but perhaps he sits alone  
On stormy waters, tossed in a little boat  
That holds but him, and can contain no  
more!

Religion tells of amity sublime  
Which no condition can preclude ; of One  
Who sees all suffering, comprehends all  
wants,

All weakness fathoms, can supply all needs :  
But is that bounty absolute?—His gifts,  
Are they not, still, in some degree, rewards  
For acts of service? Can his love extend  
To hearts that own not him? Will showers  
of grace,

When in the sky no promise may be seen,  
Fall to refresh a parched and withered land?  
Or shall the groaning Spirit cast her load  
At the Redeemer's feet?"

In rueful tone,  
With some impatience in his mien, he spake :  
Back to my mind rushed all that had been  
urged

To calm the Sufferer when his story closed ;  
I looked for counsel as unbending now ;  
But a discriminating sympathy  
Stooped to this apt reply :—

"As men from men  
Do, in the constitution of their souls,  
Differ, by mystery not to be explained ;  
And as we fall by various ways, and sink  
One deeper than another, self-condemned,  
Through manifold degrees of guilt and  
shame ;

So manifold and various are the ways  
Of restoration, fashioned to the steps  
Of all infirmity, and tending all  
To the same point, attainable by all—  
Peace in ourselves, and union with our God.  
For you, assuredly, a hopeful road  
Lies open : we have heard from you a voice  
At every moment softened in its course  
By tenderness of heart ; have seen your  
eye,

Even like an altar lit by fire from heaven,  
Kindle before us.—Your discourse this day,  
That, like the fabled Lethe, wished to flow  
In creeping sadness, through oblivious  
shades

Of death and night, has caught at every  
turn

The colours of the sun. Access for you  
Is yet preserved to principles of truth,  
Which the imaginative Will upholds  
In seats of wisdom, not to be approached  
By the inferior Faculty that moulds,  
With her minute and speculative pains,  
Opinion, ever changing!

I have seen  
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell;  
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
Listened intensely; and his countenance  
soon

Brightened with joy; for from within were  
heard

Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed  
Mysterious union with its native sea.  
Even such a shell the universe itself  
Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,  
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart  
Authentic tidings of invisible things;  
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;  
And central peace, subsisting at the heart  
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,  
Adore, and worship, when you know it not;  
Pious beyond the intention of your thought;  
Devout above the meaning of your will.  
—Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to  
feel.

The estate of man would be indeed forlorn  
If false conclusions of the reasoning power  
Made the eye blind, and closed the passages  
Through which the ear converses with the  
heart.

Has not the soul, the being of your life,  
Received a shock of awful consciousness,  
In some calm season, when these lofty rocks  
At night's approach bring down the un-  
clouded sky,

To rest upon their circumambient walls;  
A temple framing of dimensions vast,  
And yet not too enormous for the sound  
Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst  
Sublime of instrumental harmony,  
To glorify the Eternal! What if these  
Did never break the stillness that prevails  
Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,  
And the soft woodlark here did never chant  
Her vespers,—Nature fails not to provide  
Impulse and utterance. The whispering  
air

Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,  
And blind recesses of the caverned rocks;  
The little rills, and waters numberless,  
Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes  
With the loud streams: and often, at the  
hour

When issue forth the first pale stars, is  
heard,

Within the circuit of this fabric huge,  
One voice—the solitary raven, flying  
Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,  
Unseen, perchance above all power of  
sight—

An iron knell! with echoes from afar  
Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with  
which

The wanderer accompanies her flight  
Through the calm region, fades upon the  
ear,

Diminishing by distance till it seemed  
To expire; yet from the abyss is caught  
again,

And yet again recovered!

But descending  
From these imaginative heights, that yield  
Far-stretching views into eternity,  
Acknowledge that to Nature's humbler  
power

Your cherished sullenness is forced to bend  
Even here, where her amenities are sown  
With sparing hand. Then trust yourself  
abroad

To range her blooming bowers, and spa-  
cious fields,

Where on the labours of the happy throng  
She smiles, including in her wide embrace  
City, and town, and tower,—and sea with  
ships

Sprinkled;—be our Companion while we  
track

Her rivers populous with gliding life;  
While, free as air, o'er printless sands we  
march,

Or pierce the gloom of her majestic woods;  
Roaming, or resting under grateful shade  
In peace and meditative cheerfulness;  
Where living things, and things inanimate,  
Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye  
and ear,

And speak to social reason's inner sense,  
With inarticulate language.

For, the Man—  
Who, in this spirit, communes with the  
Forms



Of nature, who with understanding heart  
Both knows and loves such objects as excite  
No morbid passions, no disquietude,  
No vengeance, and no hatred—needs must  
feel

The joy of that pure principle of love  
So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught  
Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose  
But seek for objects of a kindred love  
In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.  
Accordingly he by degrees perceives  
His feelings of aversion softened down ;  
A holy tenderness pervade his frame.  
His sanity of reason not impaired,  
Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing  
clear,

From a clear fountain flowing, he looks  
round

And seeks for good ; and finds the good he  
seeks :

Until abhorrence and contempt are things  
He only knows by name ; and, if he hear,  
From other mouths, the language which  
they speak,

He is compassionate ; and has no thought,  
No feeling, which can overcome his love.

And further ; by contemplating these  
Forms

In the relations which they bear to man,  
He shall discern, how, through the various  
means

Which silently they yield, are multiplied  
The spiritual presences of absent things.  
Trust me, that for the instructed, time will  
come

When they shall meet no object but may  
teach

Some acceptable lesson to their minds  
Of human suffering, or of human joy.  
So shall they learn, while all things speak  
of man,

Their duties from all forms ; and general  
laws,

And local accidents, shall tend alike  
To rouse, to urge ; and, with the will,  
confer

The ability to spread the blessings wide  
Of true philanthropy. The light of love  
Not failing, perseverance from their steps  
Departing not, for them shall be con-  
firmed

The glorious habit by which sense is made  
Subservient still to moral purposes,

Auxiliar to divine. That change shall  
clothe

The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore  
The burthen of existence. Science then  
Shall be a precious visitant ; and then,  
And only then, be worthy of her name :  
For then her heart shall kindle ; her dull  
eye,

Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang  
Chained to its object in brute slavery ;  
But taught with patient interest to watch  
The processes of things, and serve the cause  
Of order and distinctness, not for this  
Shall it forget that its most noble use,  
Its most illustrious province, must be found  
In furnishing clear guidance, a support  
Not treacherous, to the mind's *excursive*  
power.

—So build we up the Being that we are ;  
Thus deeply drinking-in the soul of things  
We shall be wise perforce ; and, while in-  
spired

By choice, and conscious that the Will is  
free,

Shall move unswerving, even as if impelled  
By strict necessity, along the path  
Of order and of good. Whate'er we see,  
Or feel, shall tend to quicken and refine ;  
Shall fix, in calmer seats of moral strength,  
Earthly desires ; and raise, to loftier heights  
Of divine love, our intellectual soul."

Hefe closed the Sage that eloquent har-  
angue,  
Poured forth with fervour in continuous  
stream,

Such as, remote, 'mid savage wilderness,  
An Indian Chief discharges from his breast  
Into the hearing of assembled tribes,  
In open circle seated round, and hushed  
As the unbreathing air, when not a leaf  
Stirs in the mighty woods.—So did he  
speak :

The words he uttered shall not pass away  
Dispersed, like music that the wind takes  
up

By snatches, and lets fall, to be forgotten ;  
No—they sank into me, the bounteous gift  
Of one whom time and nature had made  
wise,

Gracing his doctrine with authority  
Which hostile spirits silently allow ;  
Of one accustomed to desires that feed  
On fruitage gathered from the tree of life ;

To hopes on knowledge and experience  
built ;

Of one in whom persuasion and belief  
Had ripened into faith, and faith become  
A passionate intuition ; whence the Soul,  
Though bound to earth by ties of pity and  
love,

From all injurious servitude was free.

The Sun, before his place of rest were  
reached,

Had yet to travel far, but unto us,  
To us who stood low in that hollow dell,  
He had become invisible,—a pomp  
Leaving behind of yellow radiance spread  
Over the mountain sides, in contrast bold  
With ample shadows, seemingly, no less  
Than those resplendent lights, his rich be-  
quest ;

A dispensation of his evening power.

—Adown the path that from the glen had  
led

The funeral train, the Shepherd and his  
Mate

Were seen descending :—forth to greet  
them ran

Our little Page : the rustic pair approach ;  
And in the Matron's countenance may be  
read

Plain indication that the words, which told  
How that neglected Pensioner was sent  
Before his time into a quiet grave,  
Had done to her humanity no wrong :  
But we are kindly welcomed—promptly  
served

With ostentatious zeal.—Along the floor  
Of the small Cottage in the lonely Dell  
A grateful couch was spread for our repose ;  
Where, in the guise of mountaineers, we  
lay,

Stretched upon fragrant heath, and lulled  
by sound

Of far-off torrents charming the still night,  
And, to tired limbs and over-busy thoughts,  
Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness.

## BOOK FIFTH

### THE PASTOR

#### ARGUMENT

Farewell to the Valley—Reflections—A large  
and populous Vale described—The Pastor's

Dwelling, and some account of him—Church  
and Monuments—The Solitary musing ; and  
where—Roused—In the Churchyard the Solitary  
communicates the thoughts which had recently  
passed through his mind—Lofty tone of the  
Wanderer's discourse of yesterday adverted to—  
Rite of Baptism, and the professions accompany-  
ing it, contrasted with the real state of human  
life—Apology for the Rite—Inconsistency of the  
best men—Acknowledgment that practice falls  
far below the injunctions of duty as existing in  
the mind—General complaint of a falling-off in  
the value of life after the time of youth—Outward  
appearances of content and happiness in degree  
illusive—Pastor approaches—Appeal made to  
him—His answer—Wanderer in sympathy with  
him—Suggestion that the least ambitious en-  
quirers may be most free from error—The Pastor  
is desired to give some portraits of the living or  
dead from his own observation of life among these  
Mountains—And for what purpose—Pastor con-  
sents—Mountain cottage—Excellent qualities of  
its Inhabitants—Solitary expresses his pleasure ;  
but denies the praise of virtue to worth of this  
kind—Feelings of the Priest before he enters  
upon his account of persons interred in the  
Churchyard—Graves of unbaptized Infants—  
Funeral and sepulchral observances, whence—  
Ecclesiastical Establishments, whence derived—  
Profession of belief in the doctrine of Immortality.

“FAREWELL, deep Valley, with thy one  
rude House,  
And its small lot of life-supporting fields,  
And guardian rocks !—Farewell, attractive  
seat !

To the still influx of the morning light  
Open, and day's pure cheerfulness, but  
veiled

From human observation, as if yet  
Primeval forests wrapped thee round with  
dark

Impenetrable shade ; once more farewell,  
Majestic circuit, beautiful abyss,  
By Nature destined from the birth of things  
For quietness profound !”

Upon the side  
Of that brown ridge, sole outlet of the vale  
Which foot of boldest stranger would  
attempt,

Lingering behind my comrades, thus I  
breathed

A parting tribute to a spot that seemed  
Like the fixed centre of a troubled world.  
Again I halted with reverted eyes ;  
The chain that would not slacken, was at  
length

Snap, —and, pursuing leisurely my way,  
How vain, thought I, is it by change of  
place

To seek that comfort which the mind  
denies ;

Yet trial and temptation oft are shunned  
Wisely ; and by such tenure do we hold  
Frail life's possessions, that even they  
whose fate

Yields no peculiar reason of complaint  
Might, by the promise that is here, be won  
To steal from active duties, and embrace  
Obscurity, and undisturbed repose.

—Knowledge, methinks, in these disordered  
times,

Should be allowed a privilege to have  
Her anchorites, like piety of old ;  
Men, who, from faction sacred, and un-  
stained

By war, might, if so minded, turn aside  
Uncensured, and subsist, a scattered few  
Living to God and nature, and content  
With that communion. Consecrated be  
The spots where such abide ! But happier  
still

The Man, whom, furthermore, a hope  
attends

That meditation and research may guide  
His privacy to principles and powers  
Discovered or invented ; or set forth,  
Through his acquaintance with the ways of  
truth,

In lucid order ; so that, when his course  
Is run, some faithful eulogist may say,  
He sought not praise, and praise did over-  
look

His unobtrusive merit ; but his life,  
Sweet to himself, was exercised in good  
That shall survive his name and memory.

Acknowledgments of gratitude sincere  
Accompanied these musings ; fervent thanks  
For my own peaceful lot and happy choice ;  
A choice that from the passions of the  
world

Withdrew, and fixed me in a still retreat ;  
Sheltered, but not to social duties lost,  
Secluded, but not buried ; and with song  
Cheering my days, and with industrious  
thought ;

With the ever-welcome company of books ;  
With virtuous friendship's soul-sustaining  
aid,  
And with the blessings of domestic love.

Thus occupied in mind I paced along,  
Following the rugged road, by sledge or  
wheel

Worn in the moorland, till I overtook  
My two Associates, in the morning sunshine  
Halting together on a rocky knoll,  
Whence the bare road descended rapidly  
To the green meadows of another vale.

Here did our pensive Host put forth his  
hand

In sign of farewell. " Nay," the old Man  
said,

" The fragrant air its coolness still retains ;  
The herds and flocks are yet abroad to crop  
The dewy grass ; you cannot leave us now,  
We must not part at this inviting hour."  
He yielded, though reluctant ; for his mind  
Instinctively disposed him to retire  
To his own covert ; as a billow, heaved  
Upon the beach, rolls back into the sea.

—So we descend ; and winding round a  
rock

Attain a point that showed the valley—  
stretched

In length before us ; and, not distant far,  
Upon a rising ground a grey church-tower,  
Whose battlements were screened by tufted  
trees.

And towards a crystal Mere, that lay  
beyond

Among steep hills and woods embosomed,  
flowed

A copious stream with boldly-winding  
course ;

Here traceable, there hidden—there again  
To sight restored, and glittering in the sun.  
On the stream's bank, and everywhere,  
appeared

Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots ;  
Some scattered o'er the level, others perched  
On the hill sides, a cheerful quiet scene,  
Now in its morning purity arrayed.

" As 'mid some happy valley of the  
Alps,"

Said I, " once happy, ere tyrannic power,  
Wantonly breaking in upon the Swiss,  
Destroyed their unoffending commonwealth,  
A popular equality reigns here,  
Save for yon stately House beneath whose  
roof

A rural lord might dwell." — " No feudal  
pomp,

Or power," replied the Wanderer, "to that House

Belongs, but there in his allotted Home Abides, from year to year, a genuine Priest, The shepherd of his flock; or, as a king Is styled, when most affectionately praised, The father of his people. Such is he; And rich and poor, and young and old, rejoice

Under his spiritual sway. He hath vouchsafed

To me some portion of a kind regard; And something also of his inner mind Hath he imparted—but I speak of him As he is known to all.

The calm delights Of unambitious piety he chose, And learning's solid dignity; though born Of knightly race, nor wanting powerful friends.

Hither, in prime of manhood, he withdrew From academic bowers. He loved the spot—

Who does not love his native soil?—he prized

The ancient rural character, composed Of simple manners, feelings unsuppressed And undisguised, and strong and serious thought

A character reflected in himself, With such embellishment as well beseems His rank and sacred function. This deep vale

Winds far in reaches hidden from our sight, And one a turreted manorial hall Adorns, in which the good Man's ancestors Have dwelt through ages, Patrons of this Cure.

To them, and to his own judicious pains, The Vicar's dwelling, and the whole domain, Owes that presiding aspect which might well

Attract your notice; statelier than could else

Have been bestowed, through course of common chance,

On an unwealthy mountain Benefice."

This said, oft pausing, we pursued our way;

Nor reached the village-churchyard till the sun

Travelling at steadier pace than ours, had risen

Above the summits of the highest hills, And round our path darted oppressive beams.

As chanced, the portals of the sacred Place Stood open; and we entered. On my frame,

At such transition from the fervid air, A grateful coolness fell, that seemed to strike The heart, in concert with that temperate awe

And natural reverence which the place inspired.

Not raised in nice proportions was the pile, But large and massy; for duration built; With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld By naked rafters intricately crossed, Like leafless underboughs, in some thick wood,

All withered by the depth of shade above. Admonitory texts inscribed the walls, Each, in its ornamental scroll, enclosed; Each also crowned with winged heads—a pair

Of rudely-painted Cherubim. The floor Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise, Was occupied by oaken benches ranged In seemly rows; the chancel only showed Some vain distinctions, marks of earthly state

By immemorial privilege allowed; Though with the Encincture's special sanctity

But ill according. An heraldic shield, Varying its tincture with the changeful light,

Imbued the altar-window; fixed aloft A faded hatchment hung, and one by time Yet undiscoloured. A capacious pew Of sculptured oak stood here, with drapery lined;

And marble monuments were here displayed Thronging the walls; and on the floor beneath

Sepulchral stones appeared, with emblems graven

And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with small

And shining effigies of brass inlaid.

The tribute by these various records claimed,

Duly we paid, each after each, and read

The ordinary chronicle of birth,  
Office, alliance, and promotion—all  
Ending in dust; of upright magistrates,  
Grave doctors strenuous for the mother-  
church,

And uncorrupted senators, alike  
To king and people true. A brazen plate,  
Not easily deciphered, told of one  
Whose course of earthly honour was begun  
In quality of page among the train  
Of the eighth Henry, when he crossed the  
seas

His royal state to show, and prove his  
strength

In tournament, upon the fields of France.  
Another tablet registered the death,  
And praised the gallant bearing, of a Knight  
Tried in the sea-fights of the second Charles.  
Near this brave Knight his Father lay en-  
tomb'd;

And, to the silent language giving voice,  
I read,—how in his manhood's earlier day  
He, 'mid the afflictions of intestine war  
And rightful government subverted, found  
One only solace—that he had espoused  
A virtuous Lady tenderly beloved  
For her benign perfections; and yet more  
Endeared to him, for this, that, in her state  
Of wedlock richly crowned with Heaven's  
regard,

She with a numerous issue filled his house,  
Who throve, like plants, uninjured by the  
storm

That laid their country waste. No need to  
speak

Of less particular notices assigned  
To Youth or Maiden gone before their time,  
And Matrons and unwedded Sisters old;  
Whose charity and goodness were rehearsed  
In modest panegyric.

"These dim lines,  
What would they tell?" said I,—but, from  
the task

Of puzzling out that faded narrative,  
With whisper soft my venerable Friend  
Called me; and, looking down the dark-  
some aisle,

I saw the Tenant of the lonely vale  
Standing apart; with curv'd arm reclined  
On the baptismal font; his pallid face  
Upright, as if his mind were rapt, or lost  
In some abstraction;—gracefully he stood,  
The semblance bearing of a sculptured form  
That leans upon a monumental urn

In peace, from morn to night, from year to  
year.

Him from that posture did the Sexton  
rouse;

Who entered, humming carelessly a tune,  
Continuation haply of the notes  
That had beguiled the work from which he  
came,

With spade and mattock o'er his shoulder  
hung;

To be deposited, for future need,  
In their appointed place. The pale Recluse  
Withdrew; and straight we followed,—to  
a spot

Where sun and shade were intermixed; for  
there

A broad oak, stretching forth its leafy arms  
From an adjoining pasture, overhung  
Small space of that green churchyard with  
a light

And pleasant awning. On the moss-grown  
wall

My ancient Friend and I together took  
Our seats; and thus the Solitary spake,  
Standing before us:—

"Did you note the mien  
Of that self-solaced, easy-hearted churl,  
Death's hireling, who scoops out his neigh-  
bour's grave,

Or wraps an old acquaintance up in clay,  
All unconcerned as he would bind a sheaf,  
Or plant a tree. And did you hear his  
voice?

I was abruptly summoned by the sound  
From some affecting images and thoughts,  
Which then were silent; but crave utter-  
ance now.

Much," he continued, with dejected look,  
"Much, yesterday, was said in glowing  
phrase,

Of our sublime dependencies, and hopes  
For future states of being; and the wings  
Of speculation, joyfully outspread,  
Hovered above our destiny on earth:

But stoop, and place the prospect of the soul  
In sober contrast with reality,  
And man's substantial life. If this mute  
earth

Of what it holds could speak, and every  
grave

Were as a volume, shut, yet capable  
Of yielding its contents to eye and ear,

We should recoil, stricken with sorrow and shame,  
 To see disclosed, by such dread proof, how ill  
 That which is done accords with what is known  
 To reason, and by conscience is enjoined;  
 How idly, how perversely, life's whole course,  
 To this conclusion, deviates from the line,  
 Or of the end stops short, proposed to all  
 At her aspiring outset.

Mark the babe  
 Not long accustomed to this breathing world;  
 One that hath barely learned to shape a smile,

Though yet irrational of soul, to grasp  
 With tiny finger—to let fall a tear;  
 And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dissolves,  
 To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might seem,

The outward functions of intelligent man;  
 A grave proficient in amusive feats  
 Of puppetry, that from the lap declare  
 His expectations, and announce his claims  
 To that inheritance which millions rue  
 That they were ever born to! In due time  
 A day of solemn ceremonial comes;  
 When they, who for this Minor hold in trust

Rights that transcend the loftiest heritage  
 Of mere humanity, present their Charge,  
 For this occasion daintily adorned,  
 At the baptismal font. And when the pure  
 And consecrating element hath cleansed  
 The original stain, the child is there received  
 Into the second ark, Christ's church, with trust

That he, from wrath redeemed, therein  
 shall float

Over the billows of this troublesome world  
 To the fair land of everlasting life.  
 Corrupt affections, covetous desires,  
 Are all renounced; high as the thought of man

Can carry virtue, virtue is professed;  
 A dedication made, a promise given  
 For due provision to control and guide,  
 And unremitting progress to ensure  
 In holiness and truth."

"You cannot blame,"  
 Here interposing fervently I said,  
 "Rites which attest that Man by nature lies

Bedded for good and evil in a gulf  
 Fearfully low; nor will your judgment scorn  
 Those services, whereby attempt is made  
 To lift the creature toward that eminence  
 On which, now fallen, erewhile in majesty  
 He stood; or if not so, whose top serene  
 At least he feels 'tis given him to descry;  
 Not without aspirations, evermore  
 Returning, and injunctions from within  
 Doubt to cast off and weariness; in trust  
 That what the Soul perceives, if glory lost,  
 May be, through pains and persevering hope,  
 Recovered; or, if hitherto unknown,  
 Lies within reach, and one day shall be gained."

"I blame them not," he calmly answered  
 —"no;

The outward ritual and established forms  
 With which communities of men invest  
 These inward feelings, and the aspiring vows

To which the lips give public utterance  
 Are both a natural process; and by me  
 Shall pass uncensured; though the issue prove,

Bringing from age to age its own reproach,  
 Incongruous, impotent, and blank.—But,  
 oh!

If to be weak is to be wretched—miserable,  
 As the lost Angel by a human voice  
 Hath mournfully pronounced, then, in my mind,

Far better not to move at all than move  
 By impulse sent from such illusive power,—  
 That finds and cannot fasten down; that grasps

And is rejoiced, and loses while it grasps;  
 That tempts, emboldens—for a time sustains,

And then betrays; accuses and inflicts  
 Remorseless punishment; and so retreats  
 The inevitable circle: better far  
 Than this, to graze the herb in thoughtless peace,

By foresight or remembrance, undisturbed!

Philosophy! and thou more vaunted name

Religion! with thy statelier retinue,  
 Faith, Hope, and Charity—from the visible world

Choose for your emblems whatsoe'er ye find

Of safest guidance or of firmest trust—  
The torch, the star, the anchor ; nor except  
The cross itself, at whose unconscious feet  
The generations of mankind have knelt  
Ruefully seized, and shedding bitter tears,  
And through that conflict seeking rest—of  
you,

High-titled Powers, am I constrained to  
ask,

Here standing, with the unvoyageable sky  
In faint reflection of infinitude  
Stretched overhead, and at my pensive feet  
A subterranean magazine of bones,  
In whose dark vaults my own shall soon be  
laid,

Where are your triumphs ? your dominion  
where ?

And in what age admitted and confirmed ?  
—Not for a happy land do I enquire,  
Island or grove, that hides a blessed few  
Who, with obedience willing and sincere,  
To your serene authorities conform ;  
But whom, I ask, of individual Souls,  
Have ye withdrawn from passion's crooked  
ways,

Inspired, and thoroughly fortified ?—If the  
heart

Could be inspected to its inmost folds  
By sight undazzled with the glare of praise,  
Who shall be named—in the resplendent  
line

Of sages, martyrs, confessors—the man  
Whom the best might of faith, wherever  
fixed,

For one day's little compass, has preserved  
From painful and discreditable shocks  
Of contradiction, from some vague desire  
Culpably cherished, or corrupt relapse  
To some unsanctioned fear ?”

“ If this be so,  
And Man,” said I, “ be in his noblest  
shape

Thus pitifully infirm ; then, he who made,  
And who shall judge the creature, will  
forgive.

—Yet, in its general tenor, your complaint  
Is all too true ; and surely not misplaced :  
For, from this pregnant spot of ground,  
such thoughts

Rise to the notice of a serious mind  
By natural exhalation. With the dead  
In their repose, the living in their mirth,  
Who can reflect, unmoved, upon the round  
Of smooth and solemnized complacencies,

By which, on Christian lands, from age to  
age

Profession mocks performance. Earth is  
sick,

And Heaven is weary, of the hollow words  
Which States and Kingdoms utter when  
they talk

Of truth and justice. Turn to private life  
And social neighbourhood ; look we to  
ourselves ;

A light of duty shines on every day  
For all ; and yet how few are warmed or  
cheered !

How few who mingle with their fellow-men  
And still remain self-governed, and apart,  
Like this our honoured Friend ; and thence  
acquire

Right to expect his vigorous decline,  
That promises to the end a blest old age !”

“ Yet,” with a smile of triumph thus  
exclaimed

The Solitary, “ in the life of man,  
If to the poetry of common speech  
Faith may be given, we see as in a glass  
A true reflection of the circling year,  
With all its seasons. Grant that Spring is  
there,

In spite of many a rough untoward blast,  
Hopeful and promising with buds and  
flowers ;

Yet where is glowing Summer's long rich  
day,

That *ought* to follow faithfully expressed ?  
And mellow Autumn, charged with boun-  
teous fruit,

Where is she imaged ? in what favoured  
clime

Her lavish pomp, and ripe magnificence ?  
—Yet, while the better part is missed, the  
worse

In man's autumnal season is set forth  
With a resemblance not to be denied,  
And that contents him ; bowers that hear  
no more

The voice of gladness, less and less supply  
Of outward sunshine and internal warmth ;  
And, with this change, sharp air and falling  
leaves,

Foretelling aged Winter's desolate sway.

How gay the habitations that bedeck  
This fertile valley ! Not a house but seems  
To give assurance of content within ;

Embosomed happiness, and placid love ;  
As if the sunshine of the day were met  
With answering brightness in the hearts  
of all

Who walk this favoured ground. But  
chance-regards,

And notice forced upon incurious ears ;  
These, if these only, acting in despite  
Of the encomiums by my Friend pronounced  
On humble life, forbid the judging mind  
To trust the smiling aspect of this fair  
And noiseless commonwealth. The simple  
race

Of mountaineers (by nature's self removed  
From foul temptations, and by constant  
care

Of a good shepherd tended as themselves  
Do tend their flocks) partake man's general  
lot

With little mitigation. They escape,  
Perchance, the heavier woes of guilt ; feel  
not

The tedium of fantastic idleness :  
Yet life, as with the multitude, with them  
Is fashioned like an ill-constructed tale ;  
That on the outset wastes its gay desires,  
Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,  
And pleasant interests — for the sequel  
leaving

Old things repeated with diminished grace ;  
And all the laboured novelties at best  
Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power  
Evince the want and weakness whence they  
spring."

While in this serious mood we held dis-  
course,

The reverend Pastor toward the church-  
yard gate

Approached ; and, with a mild respectful air  
Of native cordiality, our Friend  
Advanced to greet him. With a gracious  
mien

Was he received, and mutual joy prevailed.  
Awhile they stood in conference, and I  
guess

That he, who now upon the mossy wall  
Sate by my side, had vanished, if a wish  
Could have transferred him to the flying  
clouds,

Or the least penetrable hiding-place  
In his own valley's rocky guardianship.

—For me, I looked upon the pair, well  
pleased :

Nature had framed them both, and both  
were marked

By circumstance, with intermixture fine  
Of contrast and resemblance. To an oak  
Hardy and grand, a weather-beaten oak,  
Fresh in the strength and majesty of age,  
One might be likened : flourishing appeared,  
Though somewhat past the fulness of his  
prime,

The other—like a stately sycamore,  
That spreads, in gentle pomp, its honied  
shade.

A general greeting was exchanged ; and  
soon

The Pastor learned that his approach had  
given

A welcome interruption to discourse  
Grave, and in truth too often sad.—“Is Man  
A child of hope ? Do generations press  
On generations, without progress made ?  
Halts the individual, ere his hairs be grey,  
Perforce ? Are we a creature in whom good  
Preponderates, or evil ? Doth the will  
Acknowledge reason's law ? A living  
power

Is virtue, or no better than a name,  
Fleeting as health or beauty, and unsound ?  
So that the only substance which remains,  
(For thus the tenor of complaint hath run)  
Among so many shadows, are the pains  
And penalties of miserable life,  
Doomed to decay, and then expire in dust !  
—Our cogitations, this way have been  
drawn,

These are the points," the Wanderer said,  
“on which

Our inquiet turns.—Accord, good Sir !  
the light

Of your experience to dispel this gloom :  
By your persuasive wisdom shall the heart  
That frets, or languishes, be stilled and  
cheered."

“Our nature," said the Priest, in mild  
reply,

“Angels may weigh and fathom : they  
perceive,

With undistempered and unclouded spirit,  
The object as it is ; but, for ourselves,  
That speculative height *we* may not reach.  
The good and evil are our own ; and we  
Are that which we would contemplate from  
far.



Knowledge, for us, is difficult to gain—  
Is difficult to gain, and hard to keep—  
As virtue's self; like virtue is beset  
With snares; tried, tempted, subject to  
decay.

Love, admiration, fear, desire, and hate,  
Blind were we without these: through these  
alone

Are capable to notice or discern  
Or to record; we judge, but cannot be  
Indifferent judges. 'Spite of proudest  
boast,

Reason, best reason, is to imperfect man  
An effort only, and a noble aim;  
A crown, an attribute of sovereign power,  
Still to be courted—never to be won.

—Look forth, or each man dive into him-  
self;

What sees he but a creature too perturbed;  
That is transported to excess; that yearns,  
Regrets, or trembles, wrongly, or too much;  
Hopes rashly, in disgust as rash recoils;  
Battens on spleen, or moulders in despair?  
Thus comprehension fails, and truth is  
missed;

Thus darkness and delusion round our  
path

Spread, from disease, whose subtle injury  
lurks

Within the very faculty of sight.

Yet for the general purposes of faith  
In Providence, for solace and support,  
We may not doubt that who can best sub-  
ject

The will to reason's law, can strictest live  
And act in that obedience, he shall gain  
The clearest apprehension of those truths,  
Which unassisted reason's utmost power  
Is too infirm to reach. But, waiving this,  
And our regards confining within bounds  
Of less exalted consciousness, through  
which

The very multitude are free to range,  
We safely may affirm that human life  
Is either fair and tempting, a soft scene  
Grateful to sight, refreshing to the soul,  
Or a forbidden tract of cheerless view;  
Even as the same is looked at, or approached.  
Thus, when in changeful April fields are  
white

With new-fallen snow, if from the sullen  
north

Your walk conduct you hither, ere the sun

Hath gained his noontide height, this  
churchyard, filled

With mounds transversely lying side by  
side

From east to west, before you will appear  
An unillumined, blank, and dreary plain,  
With more than wintry cheerlessness and  
gloom

Saddening the heart. Go forward, and  
look back;

Look, from the quarter whence the lord of  
light,

Of life, of love, and gladness doth dispense  
His beams; which, unexcluded in their fall,  
Upon the southern side of every grave  
Have gently exercised a melting power;  
*Then* will a vernal prospect greet your eye,  
All fresh and beautiful, and green and  
bright,

Hopeful and cheerful:—vanished is the pall  
That overspread and chilled the sacred turf,  
Vanished or hidden; and the whole domain,  
To some, too lightly minded, might appear  
A meadow carpet for the dancing hours.

—This contrast, not unsuitable to life,  
Is to that other state more apposite,  
Death and its two-fold aspect! wintry—  
one,

Cold, sullen, blank, from hope and joy shut  
out;

The other, which the ray divine hath  
touched,

Replete with vivid promise, bright as  
spring."

"We see, then, as we feel," the Wan-  
derer thus

With a complacent animation spake,

"And in your judgment, Sir! the mind's  
repose

On evidence is not to be ensured

By act of naked reason. Moral truth

Is no mechanic structure, built by rule;

And which, once built, retains a steadfast  
shape

And undisturbed proportions; but a thing  
Subject, you deem, to vital accidents;

And, like the water-lily, lives and thrives,  
Whose root is fixed in stable earth, whose  
head

Floats on the tossing waves. With joy  
sincere

I re-salute these sentiments confirmed

By your authority. But how acquire

The inward principle that gives effect  
To outward argument ; the passive will  
Meek to admit ; the active energy,  
Strong and unbounded to embrace, and  
firm

To keep and cherish ? how shall man unite  
With self-forgetting tenderness of heart  
An earth-despising dignity of soul ?  
Wise in that union, and without it blind !"

"The way," said I, "to court, if not  
obtain

The ingenuous mind, apt to be set aright ;  
This, in the lonely dell discoursing, you  
Declared at large ; and by what exercise  
From visible nature, or the inner self  
Power may be trained, and renovation  
brought

To those who need the gift. But, after all,  
Is aught so certain as that man is doomed  
To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance ?  
The natural roof of that dark house in  
which

His soul is pent ! How little can be  
known—

This is the wise man's sigh ; how far we  
err—

This is the good man's not unfrequent  
pang !

And they perhaps err least, the lowly class  
Whom a benign necessity compels  
To follow reason's least ambitious course ;  
Such do I mean who, unperplexed by doubt,  
And unincited by a wish to look  
Into high objects farther than they may,  
Pace to and fro, from morn till eventide,  
The narrow avenue of daily toil  
For daily bread."

"Yes," buoyantly exclaimed  
The pale Recluse—"praise to the sturdy  
plough,

And patient spade ; praise to the simple  
crook,

And ponderous loom—resounding while it  
holds

Body and mind in one captivity ;  
And let the light mechanic tool be hailed  
With honour ; which, encasing by the  
power

Of long companionship, the artist's hand,  
Cuts off that hand, with all its world of  
nerves,

From a too busy commerce with the heart !  
—Inglorious implements of craft and toil,

Both ye that shape and build, and ye that  
force,

By slow solicitation, earth to yield  
Her annual bounty, sparingly dealt forth  
With wise reluctance ; you would I extol,  
Not for gross good alone which ye produce,  
But for the impertinent and ceaseless strife  
Of proofs and reasons ye preclude—in those  
Who to your dull society are born,  
And with their humble birthright rest content.

—Would I had ne'er renounced it !"

A slight flush  
Of moral anger previously had tinged  
The old Man's cheek ; but, at this closing  
turn

Of self-reproach, it passed away. Said he,  
"That which we feel we utter ; as we think  
So have we argued ; reaping for our pains  
No visible recompense. For our relief  
You," to the Pastor turning thus he spake,  
"Have kindly interposed. May I entreat  
Your further help ? The mine of real life  
Dig for us ; and present us, in the shape  
Of virgin ore, that gold which we, by pains  
Fruitless as those of æry alchemists,  
Seek from the torturing crucible. There  
lies

Around us a domain where you have long  
Watched both the outward course and inner  
heart :

Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts ;  
For our disputes, plain pictures. Say what  
man

He is who cultivates yon hanging field ;  
What qualities of mind she bears, who  
comes,

For morn and evening service, with her pail,  
To that green pasture ; place before our  
sight

The family who dwell within yon house  
Fenced round with glittering laurel ; or in  
that

Below, from which the curling smoke  
ascends.

Or rather, as we stand on holy earth,<sup>1</sup>  
And have the dead around us, take from  
them

Your instances ; for they are both best  
known,

And by frail man most equitably judged.  
Epitomise the life ; pronounce, you can,  
Authentic epitaphs on some of these

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Who, from their lowly mansions hither  
brought,  
Beneath this turf lie mouldering at our feet :  
So, by your records, may our doubts be  
solved ;  
And so, not searching higher we may learn  
*To prize the breath we share with human  
kind ;*  
*And look upon the dust of man with awe."*

The Priest replied—"An office you im-  
pose  
For which peculiar requisites are mine ;  
Yet much, I feel, is wanting—else the task  
Would be most grateful. True indeed it is  
That they whom death has hidden from our  
sight  
Are worthiest of the mind's regard ; with  
these  
The future cannot contradict the past :  
Mortality's last exercise and proof  
Is undergone ; the transit made that shows  
The very Soul, revealed as she departs.  
Yet, on your first suggestion, will I give,  
Ere we descend into these silent vaults,  
One picture from the living.

You behold,  
High on the breast of yon dark mountain,  
dark  
With stony barrenness, a shining speck  
Bright as a sunbeam sleeping till a shower  
Brush it away, or cloud pass over it ;  
And such it might be deemed—a sleeping  
sunbeam ;  
But 'tis a plot of cultivated ground,  
Cut off, an island in the dusky waste ;  
And that attractive brightness is its own.  
The lofty site, by nature framed to tempt  
Amid a wilderness of rocks and stones  
'The tiller's hand, a hermit might have  
chosen,  
For opportunity presented, thence  
Far forth to send his wandering eye o'er  
land  
And ocean, and look down upon the works,  
The habitations, and the ways of men,  
Himself unseen ! But no tradition tells  
That ever hermit dipped his maple dish  
In the sweet spring that lurks 'mid yon  
green fields ;  
And no such visionary views belong  
To those who occupy and till the ground,  
High on that mountain where they long  
have dwelt

A wedded pair in childless solitude.  
A house of stones collected on the spot,  
By rude hands built, with rocky knolls in  
front.  
Backed also by a ledge of rock, whose crest  
Of birch-trees waves over the chimney top ;  
A rough abode—in colour, shape, and  
size,  
Such as in unsafe times of border-war  
Might have been wished for and contrived,  
to elude  
The eye of roving plunderer—for their need  
Suffices ; and unshaken bears the assault  
Of their most dreaded foe, the strong South-  
west  
In anger blowing from the distant sea.  
—Alone within her solitary hut ;  
There, or within the compass of her fields,  
At any moment may the Dame be found,  
True as the stock-dove to her shallow nest  
And to the grove that holds it. She be-  
guiles  
By intermingled work of house and field  
The summer's day, and winter's ; with  
success  
Not equal, but sufficient to maintain,  
Even at the worst, a smooth stream of  
content,  
Until the expected hour at which her Mate  
From the far-distant quarry's vault returns ;  
And by his converse crowns a silent day  
With evening cheerfulness. In powers of  
mind,  
In scale of culture, few among my flock  
Hold lower rank than this sequestered pair :  
But true humility descends from heaven ;  
And that best gift of heaven hath fallen on  
them ;  
Abundant recompense for every want.  
—Stoop from your height, ye proud, and  
copy these !  
Who, in their noiseless dwelling-place, can  
hear  
The voice of wisdom whispering scripture  
texts  
For the mind's government, or temper's  
peace ;  
And recommending for their mutual need,  
Forgiveness, patience, hope, and charity !"

"Much was I pleased," the grey-haired  
Wanderer said,  
"When to those shining fields our notice  
first

You turned; and yet more pleased have  
from your lips

Gathered this fair report of them who dwell  
In that retirement; whither, by such course  
Of evil hap and good as oft awaits  
A tired way-faring man, once / was brought  
While traversing alone yon mountain pass.  
Dark on my road the autumnal evening  
fell,

And night succeeded with unusual gloom,  
So hazardous that feet and hands became  
Guides better than mine eyes—until a  
light

High in the gloom appeared, too high,  
methought,

For human habitation; but I longed  
To reach it, destitute of other hope.  
I looked with steadiness as sailors look  
On the north star, or watch-tower's distant  
lamp,

And saw the light—now fixed—and shift-  
ing now—

Not like a dancing meteor, but in line  
Of never-varying motion, to and fro.  
It is no night-fire of the naked hills,  
Thought I—some friendly covert must be  
near.

With this persuasion thitherward my steps  
I turn, and reach at last the guiding light;  
Joy to myself! but to the heart of her  
Who there was standing on the open hill,  
(The same kind Matron whom your tongue  
hath praised)

Alarm and disappointment! The alarm  
Ceased, when she learned through what  
mishap I came,

And by what help had gained those distant  
fields.

Drawn from her cottage, on that æry height,  
Bearing a lantern in her hand she stood,  
Or paced the ground—to guide her Hus-  
band home,

By that unwearied signal, kenne'd afar;  
An anxious duty! which the lofty site,  
Traversed but by a few irregular paths,  
Imposes, whenso'er untoward chance  
Detains him after his accustomed hour  
Till night lies black upon the ground. 'But  
come,

Come,' said the Matron, 'to our poor  
abode;

Those dark rocks hide it!' Entering, I  
beheld

A blazing fire—beside a cleanly hearth

Sate down; and to her office, with leave  
asked,

The Dame returned.

Or ere that glowing pile  
Of mountain turf required the builder's  
hand

Its wasted splendour to repair, the door  
Opened, and she re-entered with glad looks,  
Her Helpmate following. Hospitable fare,  
Frank conversation, made the evening's  
treat:

Need a bewildered traveller wish for more?  
But more was given; I studied as we sate  
By the bright fire, the good Man's form,  
and face

Not less than beautiful; an open brow  
Of undisturbed humanity; a cheek  
Suffused with something of a feminine hue;  
Eyes beaming courtesy and mild regard;  
But, in the quicker turns of the discourse,  
Expression slowly varying, that evinced  
A tardy apprehension. From a fount  
Lost, thought I, in the obscurities of time,  
But honoured once, those features and that  
mien

May have descended, though I see them  
here.

In such a man, so gentle and subdued,  
Withal so graceful in his gentleness,  
A race illustrious for heroic deeds,  
Humbled, but not degraded, may expire.  
This pleasing fancy (cherished and upheld  
By sundry recollections of such fall  
From high to low, ascent from low to high,  
As books record, and even the careless  
mind

Cannot but notice among men and things)  
Went with me to the place of my repose.

Roused by the crowing cock at dawn of  
day,

I yet had risen too late to interchange  
A morning salutation with my Host,  
Gone forth already to the far-off seat  
Of his day's work. 'Three dark mid-winter  
months

'Pass,' said the Matron 'and I never see,  
'Save when the sabbath brings its kind  
release,

'My Helpmate's face by light of day. He  
quits

'His door in darkness, nor till dusk returns.  
'And, through Heaven's blessing, thus we  
gain the bread

'For which we pray; and for the wants  
provide

'Of sickness, accident, and helpless age.

'Companions have I many; many friends,

'Dependants, comforters—my wheel, my  
fire,

'All day the house-clock ticking in mine  
ear,

'The cackling hen, the tender chicken  
brood,

'And the wild birds that gather round my  
porch.

'This honest sheep-dog's countenance I  
read;

'With him can talk; nor blush to waste a  
word

'On creatures less intelligent and shrewd.

'And if the blustering wind that drives the  
clouds

'Care not for me, he lingers round my door,

'And makes me pastime when our tempers  
suit;—

'But, above all, my thoughts are my support,

'My comfort:—would that they were oftener  
fixed

'On what, for guidance in the way that  
leads

'To heaven, I know, by my Redeemer  
taught.'

The Matron ended—nor could I forbear  
To exclaim—'O happy! yielding to the  
law

Of these privations, richer in the main!—  
While thankless thousands are oppress and  
clogged

By ease and leisure; by the very wealth  
And pride of opportunity made poor;  
While tens of thousands falter in their path,  
And sink, through utter want of cheering  
light;

For you the hours of labour do not flag;  
For you each evening hath its shining star,  
And every sabbath-day its golden sun."

"Yes!" said the Solitary with a smile  
That seemed to break from an expanding  
heart,

"The untutored bird may found, and so  
construct,

And with such soft materials line, her nest  
Fixed in the centre of a prickly brake,  
That the thorns wound her not; they only  
guard.

Powers not unjustly likened to those gifts

Of happy instinct which the woodland bird  
Shares with her species, nature's grace  
sometimes

Upon the individual doth confer,  
Among her higher creatures born and  
trained

To use of reason. And, I own that, tired  
Of the ostentatious world—a swelling stage  
With empty actions and vain passions  
stuffed,

And from the private struggles of mankind  
Hoping far less than I could wish to hope,  
Far less than once I trusted and believed—  
I love to hear of those, who, not contending  
Nor summoned to contend for virtue's  
prize,

Miss not the humbler good at which they  
aim,

Blest with a kindly faculty to blunt  
The edge of adverse circumstance, and turn  
Into their contraries the petty plagues  
And hindrances with which they stand  
beset.

In early youth, among my native hills,  
I knew a Scottish Peasant who possessed  
A few small crofts of stone-encumbered  
ground;

Masses of every shape and size, that lay  
Scattered about under the mouldering  
walls

Of a rough precipice; and some, apart,  
In quarters unobnoxious to such chance,  
As if the moon had showered them down  
in spite.

But he repined not. Though the plough  
was scared

By these obstructions, 'round the shady  
stones

'A fertilising moisture,' said the Swain,  
'Gathers, and is preserved; and feeding  
dews

'And damps, through all the droughty  
summer day

'From out their substance issuing, maintain  
'Herbage that never fails; no grass springs  
up

'So green, so fresh, so plentiful, as mine!'  
But thinly sown these natures; rare, at  
least,

The mutual aptitude of seed and soil  
That yields such kindly product. He,  
whose bed

Perhaps yon loose sods cover, the poor  
Pensioner

Brought yesterday from our sequestered dell  
Here to lie down in lasting quiet, he,  
If living now, could otherwise report  
Of rustic loneliness: that grey-haired  
Orphan—

So call him, for humanity to him  
No parent was—feelingly could have told,  
In life, in death, what solitude can breed  
Of selfishness, and cruelty, and vice;  
Or, if it breed not, hath not power to cure.  
—But your compliance, Sir! with our  
request

My words too long have hindered."  
Undeterred,

Perhaps incited rather, by these shocks,  
In no ungracious opposition, given  
To the confiding spirit of his own  
Experienced faith, the reverend Pastor  
said,

Around him looking; "Where shall I  
begin?

Who shall be first selected from my flock  
Gathered together in their peaceful fold?"  
He paused—and having lifted up his eyes  
To the pure heaven, he cast them down  
again

Upon the earth beneath his feet; and  
spake:—

"To a mysteriously-united pair  
This place is consecrate; to Death and Life,  
And to the best affections that proceed  
From their conjunction; consecrate to faith  
In him who bled for man upon the cross;  
Hallowed to revelation; and no less  
To reason's mandates: and the hopes  
divine

Of pure imagination;—above all,  
To charity, and love, that have provided,  
Within these precincts, a capacious bed  
And receptacle, open to the good  
And evil, to the just and the unjust;  
In which they find an equal resting-place:  
Even as the multitude of kindred brooks  
And streams, whose murmur fills this  
hollow vale,

Whether their course be turbulent or  
smooth,

Their waters clear or sullied, all are lost  
Within the bosom of yon crystal Lake,  
And end their journey in the same repose!

And blest are they who sleep; and we  
that know,

While in a spot like this we breathe and  
walk,

That all beneath us by the wings are covered  
Of motherly humanity, outspread  
And gathering all within their tender shade,  
Though loth and slow to come! A battle-  
field,

In stillness left when slaughter is no more,  
With this compared, makes a strange  
spectacle!

A dismal prospect yields the wild shore  
strewn

With wrecks, and trod by feet of young and  
old

Wandering about in miserable search  
Of friends or kindred, whom the angry sea  
Restores not to their prayer! Ah! who  
would think

That all the scattered subjects which com-  
pose

Earth's melancholy vision through the space  
Of all her climes—these wretched, these  
depraved,

To virtue lost, insensible of peace,  
From the delights of charity cut off,  
To pity dead, the oppressor and the oppressed;  
Tyrants who utter the destroying word,  
And slaves who will consent to be destroyed—  
Were of one species with the sheltered few,  
Who, with a dutiful and tender hand,  
Lodged, in a dear appropriated spot,  
This file of infants; some that never breathed  
The vital air; others, which, though allowed  
That privilege, did yet expire too soon,  
Or with too brief a warning, to admit  
Administration of the holy rite

That lovingly consigns the babe to the arms  
Of Jesus, and his everlasting care.

These that in trembling hope are laid apart;  
And the besprinkled nursing, unrequired  
Till he begins to smile upon the breast  
That feeds him; and the tottering little-one  
Taken from air and sunshine when the rose  
Of infancy first blooms upon his cheek;  
The thinking, thoughtless, school-boy; the  
bold youth

Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid  
Smitten while all the promises of life  
Are opening round her; those of middle  
age,

Cast down while confident in strength they  
stand,

Like pillars fixed more firmly, as might  
seem,

And more secure, by very weight of all  
That, for support, rests on them; the decayed

And burthensome; and lastly, that poor few  
Whose light of reason is with age extinct;  
The hopeful and the hopeless, first and last,  
The earliest summoned and the longest spared—

Are here deposited, with tribute paid  
Various, but unto each some tribute paid;  
As if, amid these peaceful hills and groves,  
Society were touched with kind concern,  
And gentle 'Nature grieved, that one should die';<sup>1</sup>

Or, if the change demanded no regret,  
Observed the liberating stroke—and blessed.

And whence that tribute? wherefore these regards?<sup>1</sup>

Not from the naked *Heart* alone of Man  
(Though claiming high distinction upon earth

As the sole spring and fountain-head of tears,

His own peculiar utterance for distress  
Or gladness)—No," the philosophic Priest  
Continued, "'tis not in the vital seat  
Of feeling to produce them, without aid  
From the pure soul, the soul sublime and pure;

With her two faculties of eye and ear,  
The one by which a creature, whom his sins

Have rendered prone, can upward look to heaven;

The other that empowers him to perceive  
The voice of Deity, on height and plain,  
Whispering those truths in stillness, which the WORD,

To the four quarters of the winds, proclaims.  
Not without such assistance could the use  
Of these benign observances prevail:

Thus are they born, thus fostered, thus maintained;

And by the care prospective of our wise  
Forefathers, who, to guard against the shocks

The fluctuation and decay of things,  
Embodied and established these high truths  
In solemn institutions:—men convinced

That life is love and immortality,  
The being one, and one the element.

There lies the channel, and original bed,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

From the beginning, hollowed out and scooped

For Man's affections—else betrayed and lost,

And swallowed up 'mid deserts infinite!  
This is the genuine course, the aim, and end  
Of prescient reason; all conclusions else  
Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and perverse.

The faith partaking of those holy times,  
Life, I repeat, is energy of love  
Divine or human; exercised in pain,  
In strife, and tribulation; and ordained,  
If so approved and sanctified, to pass,  
Through shades and silent rest, to endless joy."

## BOOK SIXTH

### THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

#### ARGUMENT

Poet's Address to the State and Church of England—The Pastor not inferior to the ancient Worthies of the Church—He begins his Narratives with an instance of unrequited Love—Anguish of mind subdued, and how—The lonely Miner—An instance of perseverance—Which leads by contrast to an example of abused talents, irresolution, and weakness—Solitary, applying this covertly to his own case, asks for an instance of some Stranger, whose dispositions may have led him to end his days here—Pastor, in answer, gives an account of the harmonising influence of Solitude upon two men of opposite principles, who had encountered agitations in public life—The rule by which Peace may be obtained expressed, and where—Solitary hints at an overpowering Fatality—Answer of the Pastor—What subjects he will exclude from his Narratives—Conversation upon this—Instance of an unamiable character, a Female, and why given—Contrasted with this, a meek sufferer, from unguarded and betrayed love—Instance of heavier guilt, and its consequences to the Offender—With this instance of a Marriage Contract broken is contrasted one of a Widower, evidencing his faithful affection towards his deceased wife by his care of their female Children.

HAIL to the crown by Freedom shaped—to gird

An English Sovereign's brow! and to the throne

Whereon he sits ! Whose deep foundations  
lie

In veneration and the people's love ;  
Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law.  
—Hail to the State of England ! And  
conjoin

With this a salutation as devout,  
Made to the spiritual fabric of her Church ;  
Founded in truth ; by blood of Martyrdom  
Cemented ; by the hands of Wisdom reared  
In beauty of holiness, with ordered pomp,  
Decent and unproved. The voice, that  
greets

The majesty of both, shall pray for both ;  
That, mutually protected and sustained,  
They may endure long as the sea surrounds  
This favoured Land, or sunshine warms  
her soil.

And O, ye swelling hills, and spacious  
plains  
Besprent from shore to shore with steeple-  
towers,

And spires whose 'silent finger points to  
heaven ;'<sup>1</sup>

Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk  
Of ancient minster lifted above the cloud  
Of the dense air, which town or city breeds  
To intercept the sun's glad beams—may  
ne'er

That true succession fail of English hearts,  
Who, with ancestral feeling, can perceive  
What in those holy structures ye possess  
Of ornamental interest, and the charm  
Of pious sentiment diffused afar,  
And human charity, and social love.  
—Thus never shall the indignities of time  
Approach their reverend graces, unop-  
posed ;

Nor shall the elements be free to hurt  
Their fair proportions ; nor the blinder rage  
Of bigot zeal madly to overturn ;  
And, if the desolating hand of war  
Spare them, they shall continue to bestow  
Upon the thronged abodes of busy men  
(Depraved, and ever prone to fill the mind  
Exclusively with transitory things)  
An air and mien of dignified pursuit ;  
Of sweet civility, on rustic wilds.

The Poet, fostering for his native land  
Such hope, entreats that servants may  
abound

Of those pure altars worthy ; ministers  
Detached from pleasure, to the love of gain  
Superior, insusceptible of pride,  
And by ambitious longings undisturbed ;  
Men, whose delight is where their duty  
leads

Or fixes them ; whose least distinguished  
day

Shines with some portion of that heavenly  
lustre

Which makes the sabbath lovely in the  
sight

Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.  
—And, as on earth it is the doom of truth  
To be perpetually attacked by foes  
Open or covert, be that priesthood still,  
For her defence, replenished with a band  
Of strenuous champions, in scholastic arts  
Thoroughly disciplined ; nor (if in course  
Of the revolving world's disturbances  
Cause should recur, which righteous Heaven  
avert !

To meet such trial) from their spiritual  
sires

Degenerate ; who, constrained to wield the  
sword

Of disputation, shrunk not, though assailed  
With hostile din, and combating in sight  
Of angry umpires, partial and unjust ;  
And did, thereafter, bathe their hands in  
fire,

So to declare the conscience satisfied :  
Nor for their bodies would accept release ;  
But, blessing God and praising him, be-  
queathed

With their last breath, from out the smoul-  
dering flame,

The faith which they by diligence had  
earned,

Or, through illuminating grace, received,  
For their dear countrymen, and all man-  
kind.

O high example, constancy divine !

Even such a Man (inheriting the zeal  
And from the sanctity of elder times  
Not deviating,—a priest, the like of whom  
If multiplied, and in their stations set,  
Would o'er the bosom of a joyful land  
Spread true religion and her genuine fruits)  
Before me stood that day ; on holy ground  
Fraught with the relics of mortality ;  
Exalting tender themes, by just degrees  
To lofty raised ; and to the highest, last ;

<sup>1</sup> See Note.



The head and mighty paramount of truths,—  
Immortal life, in never-fading worlds,  
For mortal creatures, conquered and secured.

That basis laid, those principles of faith  
Announced, as a preparatory act  
Of reverence done to the spirit of the place,  
The Pastor cast his eyes upon the ground;  
Not, as before, like one oppressed with awe

But with a mild and social cheerfulness;  
Then to the Solitary turned, and spake.

"At morn or eve, in your retired domain,  
Perchance you not unfrequently have marked

A Visitor—in quest of herbs and flowers;  
Too delicate employ, as would appear,  
For one, who, though of drooping mien,  
had yet

From nature's kindness received a frame  
Robust as ever rural labour bred."

The Solitary answered: "Such a Form  
Full well I recollect. We often crossed  
Each other's path; but, as the Intruder  
seemed

Fondly to prize the silence which he kept,  
And I as willingly did cherish mine,  
We met, and passed, like shadows. I  
have heard,

From my good Host, that being crazed in brain

By unrequited love, he scaled the rocks,  
Dived into caves, and pierced the matted  
woods,

In hope to find some virtuous herb of power

To cure his malady!"

The Vicar smiled,—  
"Alas! before to-morrow's sun goes down  
His habitation will be here: for him  
That open grave is destined."

"Died he then  
Of pain and grief?" the Solitary asked,  
"Do not believe it; never could that be!"

"He loved," the Vicar answered,  
"deeply loved,  
Loved fondly, truly, fervently; and dared  
At length to tell his love, but sued in vain;

Rejected, yea repelled; and, if with scorn  
Upon the haughty maiden's brow, 'tis but  
A high-prized plume which female Beauty  
wears

In wantonness of conquest, or puts on  
To cheat the world, or from herself to hide  
Humiliation, when no longer free.

That he could brook, and glory in;—but  
when

The tidings came that she whom he had  
wooded

Was wedded to another, and his heart  
Was forced to rend away its only hope;  
Then, Pity could have scarcely found on  
earth

An object worthier of regard than he,  
In the transition of that bitter hour!

Lost was she, lost; nor could the Sufferer  
say

That in the act of preference he had been  
Unjustly dealt with; but the Maid was  
gone!

Had vanished from his prospects and desires;  
Not by translation to the heavenly choir  
Who have put off their mortal spoils—ah  
no!

She lives another's wishes to complete,—  
'Joy be their lot, and happiness,' he cried,  
'His lot and hers, as misery must be mine!'

Such that strong concussion; but the  
Man,

Who trembled, trunk and limbs, like some  
huge oak

By a fierce tempest shaken, soon resumed  
The steadfast quiet natural to a mind  
Of composition gentle and sedate,  
And, in its movements, circumspect and  
slow.

To books, and to the long-forsaken desk,  
O'er which enchained by science he had  
loved

To bend, he stoutly re-addressed himself,  
Resolved to quell his pain, and search for  
truth

With keener appetite (if that might be)  
And closer industry. Of what ensued  
Within the heart no outward sign appeared  
Till a betraying sickliness was seen  
To tinge his cheek; and through his frame  
it crept

With slow mutation unconcealable;  
Such universal change as autumn makes  
In the fair body of a leafy grove,

Discoloured, then divested.

'Tis affirmed  
By poets skilled in nature's secret ways  
That Love will not submit to be controlled  
By mastery :—and the good Man lacked  
not friends

Who strove to instil this truth into his mind,  
A mind in all heart-mysteries unversed.

'Go to the hills,' said one, 'remit a while  
'This baneful diligence :—at early morn  
'Court the fresh air, explore the heaths and  
woods ;

'And, leaving it to others to foretell,  
'By calculations sage, the ebb and flow  
'Of tides, and when the moon will be  
eclipsed,

'Do you, for your own benefit, construct  
'A calendar of flowers, plucked as they  
blow

'Where health abides, and cheerfulness,  
and peace.'

The attempt was made ;—'tis needless to  
report

How hopelessly ; but innocence is strong,  
And an entire simplicity of mind  
A thing most sacred in the eye of Heaven ;  
That opens, for such sufferers, relief  
Within the soul, fountains of grace divine ;  
And doth commend their weakness and  
disease

To Nature's care, assisted in her office  
By all the elements that round her wait  
To generate, to preserve, and to restore ;  
And by her beautiful array of forms  
Shedding sweet influence from above ; or  
pure

Delight exhaling from the ground they  
tread."

"Impute it not to impatience, if," ex-  
claimed

The Wanderer, "I infer that he was healed  
By perseverance in the course prescribed."

"You do not err : the powers, that had  
been lost

By slow degrees, were gradually regained ;  
The fluttering nerves composed ; the beat-  
ing heart

In rest established ; and the jarring thoughts  
To harmony restored.—But yon dark mould  
Will cover him, in the fulness of his strength,  
Hastily smitten by a fever's force ;  
Yet not with stroke so sudden as refused

Time to look back with tenderness on her  
Whom he had loved in passion ; and to  
send

Some farewell words—with one, but one,  
request ;

That, from his dying hand, she would accept  
Of his possessions that which most he prized ;  
A book, upon whose leaves some chosen  
plants,

By his own hand disposed with nicest care,  
In undecaying beauty were preserved ;  
Mute register, to him, of time and place,  
And various fluctuations in the breast ;  
To her, a monument of faithful love  
Conquered, and in tranquillity retained !

Close to his destined habitation, lies  
One who achieved a humbler victory,  
Though marvellous in its kind. A place  
there is

High in these mountains, that allured a band  
Of keen adventurers to unite their pains  
In search of precious ore : they tried, were  
foiled—

And all desisted, all, save him alone.  
He, taking counsel of his own clear thoughts,  
And trusting only to his own weak hands,  
Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,  
Unseconded, uncoun tenanced ; then, as  
time

Passed on, while still his lonely efforts  
found

No recompense, derided ; and at length,  
By many pitied, as insane of mind ;  
By others dreaded as the luckless thrall  
Of subterranean Spirits feeding hope  
By various mockery of sight and sound ;  
Hope after hope, encouraged and destroyed.  
—But when the lord of seasons had matured  
The fruits of earth through space of twice  
ten years,

The mountain's entrails offered to his view  
And trembling grasp the long-deferred  
reward.

Not with more transport did Columbus  
greet

A world, his rich discovery ! But our Swain,  
A very hero till his point was gained,  
Proved all unable to support the weight  
Of prosperous fortune. On the fields he  
looked

With an unsettled liberty of thought,  
Wishes and endless schemes ; by daylight  
walked

Giddy and restless; ever and anon  
Quaffed in his gratitude immoderate cups;  
And truly might be said to die of joy!  
He vanished; but conspicuous to this day  
The path remains that linked his cottage-  
door

To the mine's mouth; a long and slanting  
track,

Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,  
Worn by his daily visits to and from  
The darksome centre of a constant hope.  
This vestige, neither force of beating rain,  
Nor the vicissitudes of frost and thaw  
Shall cause to fade, till ages pass away;  
And it is named, in memory of the event,  
THE PATH OF PERSEVERANCE."

"Thou from whom  
Man has his strength," exclaimed the  
Wanderer, "oh!

Do thou direct it! To the virtuous grant  
The penetrative eye which can perceive  
In this blind world the guiding vein of hope;  
That, like this Labourer, such may dig  
their way,

'Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified;'  
Grant to the wise *his* firmness of resolve!"

"That prayer were not superfluous," said  
the Priest,

"Amid the noblest relics, proudest dust,  
That Westminster, for Britain's glory, holds  
Within the bosom of her awful pile,  
Ambitiously collected. Yet the sigh,  
Which wafts that prayer to heaven, is due  
to all,

Wherever laid, who living fell below  
Their virtue's humbler mark; a sigh of *pain*  
If to the opposite extreme they sank.  
How would you pity her who yonder rests;  
Him, farther off; the pair, who here are  
laid;

But, above all, that mixture of earth's mould  
Whom sight of this green hillock to my mind  
Recalls!

*He* lived not till his locks were nipped  
By seasonable frost of age; nor died  
Before his temples, prematurely forced  
To mix the manly brown with silver grey,  
Gave obvious instance of the sad effect  
Produced, when thoughtless Folly hath  
usurped

The natural crown that sage Experience  
wears.

Gay, volatile, ingenious, quick to learn,

And prompt to exhibit all that he possessed  
Or could perform; a zealous actor, hired  
Into the troop of mirth, a soldier, sworn  
Into the lists of giddy enterprise—  
Such was he; yet, as if within his frame  
Two several souls alternately had lodged,  
Two sets of manners could the Youth put  
on;

And, fraught with antics as the Indian bird  
That writhes and chatters in her wiry cage,  
Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth  
and still

As the mute swan that floats adown the  
stream,

Or, on the waters of the unruffled lake,  
Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf,  
That flutters on the bough, lighter than he;  
And not a flower, that droops in the green  
shade,

More winningly reserved! If ye enquire  
How such consummate elegance was bred  
Amid these wilds, this answer may suffice;  
'Twas Nature's will; who sometimes under-  
takes,

For the reproof of human vanity,  
Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.  
Hence, for this Favourite—lavishly endowed  
With personal gifts, and bright instinctive  
wit,

While both, embellishing each other, stood  
Yet farther recommended by the charm  
Of fine demeanour, and by dance and song,  
And skill in letters—every fancy shaped  
Fair expectations; nor, when to the world's  
Capacious field forth went the Adventurer,  
there

Were he and his attainments overlooked,  
Or scantily rewarded; but all hopes,  
Cherished for him, he suffered to depart,  
Like blighted buds; or clouds that mimicked  
land

Before the sailor's eye; or diamond drops  
That sparkling decked the morning grass;  
or aught

That *was* attractive, and hath ceased to be!

Yet, when this Prodigal returned, the  
rites

Of joyful greeting were on him bestowed,  
Who, by humiliation undeterred,  
Sought for his weariness a place of rest  
Within his Father's gates.—Whence came  
he?—clothed

In tattered garb, from hovels where abides

Necessity, the stationary host  
Of vagrant poverty; from rifted barns  
Where no one dwells but the wide-staring  
owl

And the owl's prey; from these bare haunts,  
to which

He had descended from the proud saloon,  
He came, the ghost of beauty and of health,  
The wreck of gaiety! But soon revived  
In strength, in power refitted, he renewed  
His suit to Fortune; and she smiled again  
Upon a fickle Ingrate. Thrice he rose,

Thrice sank as willingly. For he—whose  
nerves

Were used to thrill with pleasure, while his  
voice

Softly accompanied the tuneful harp,  
By the nice finger of fair ladies touched  
In glittering halls—was able to derive  
No less enjoyment from an abject choice.

Who happier for the moment—who more  
blithe

Than this fallen Spirit? in those dreary  
holds

His talents lending to exalt the freaks  
Of merry-making beggars,—nor provoked  
To laughter multiplied in louder peals  
By his malicious wit; then, all enchained  
With mute astonishment, themselves to see  
In their own arts outdone, their fame  
eclipsed,

As by the very presence of the Fiend  
Who dictates and inspires illusive feats,  
For knavish purposes! The city, too,  
(With shame I speak it) to her guilty bowers  
Allured him, sunk so low in self-respect  
As there to linger, there to eat his bread,  
Hired minstrel of voluptuous blandishment;  
Charming the air with skill of hand or voice,  
Listen who would, be wrought upon who  
might,

Sincerely wretched hearts, or falsely gay.  
—Such the too frequent tenor of his boast  
In ears that relished the report;—but all  
Was from his Parents happily concealed;  
Who saw enough for blame and pitying  
love.

They also were permitted to receive  
His last, repentant breath; and closed his  
eyes,

No more to open on that irksome world  
Where he had long existed in the state  
Of a young fowl beneath one mother  
hatched,

Though from another sprung, different in  
kind:

Where he had lived, and could not cease  
to live,

Distracted in propensity; content  
With neither element of good or ill;  
And yet in both rejoicing; man unblessed;  
Of contradictions infinite the slave,  
Till his deliverance, when Mercy made him  
One with himself, and one with them that  
sleep."

"'Tis strange," observed the Solitary,  
"strange

It seems, and scarcely less than pitiful,  
That in a land where charity provides  
For all that can no longer feed themselves,  
A man like this should choose to bring his  
shame

To the parental door; and with his sighs  
Infect the air which he had freely breathed  
In happy infancy. He could not pine,  
Through lack of converse; no—he must  
have found

Abundant exercise for thought and speech,  
In his individual being, self-reviewed,  
Self-catechised, self-punished.—Some there  
are

Who, drawing near their final home, and  
much

And daily longing that the same were  
reached,

Would rather shun than seek the fellowship  
Of kindred mould.—Such haply here are  
laid?"

"Yes," said the Priest, "the Genius of  
our hills—

Who seems, by these stupendous barriers  
cast

Round his domain, desirous not alone  
To keep his own, but also to exclude  
All other progeny—doth sometimes lure,  
Even by his studied depth of privacy,  
The unhappy alien hoping to obtain  
Concealment, or seduced by wish to find,  
In place from outward molestation free,  
Helps to internal ease. Of many such  
Could I discourse; but as their stay was  
brief,

So their departure only left behind  
Fancies, and loose conjectures. Other  
trace

Survives, for worthy mention, of a pair

Who, from the pressure of their several  
fates,  
Meeting as strangers, in a petty town  
Whose blue roofs ornament a distant reach  
Of this far-winding vale, remained as friends  
True to their choice; and gave their bones  
in trust  
To this loved cemetery, here to lodge  
With unescutcheoned privacy interred  
Far from the family vault.—A Chieftain  
one  
By right of birth; within whose spotless  
breast  
The fire of ancient Caledonia burned:  
He, with the foremost whose impatience  
hailed  
The Stuart, landing to resume, by force  
Of arms, the crown which bigotry had lost,  
Aroused his clan; and, fighting at their  
head,  
With his brave sword endeavoured to prevent  
Culloden's fatal overthrow. Escaped  
From that disastrous rout, to foreign shores  
He fled; and when the lenient hand of time  
Those troubles had appeased, he sought  
and gained,  
For his obscured condition, an obscure  
Retreat, within this nook of English ground.

The other, born in Britain's southern  
tract,  
Had fixed his milder loyalty, and placed  
His gentler sentiments of love and hate,  
There, where *they* placed them who in con-  
science prized  
The new succession, as a line of kings  
Whose oath had virtue to protect the land  
Against the dire assaults of papacy  
And arbitrary rule. But launch thy bark  
On the distempered flood of public life,  
And cause for most rare triumph will be  
thine  
If, spite of keenest eye and steadiest hand,  
The stream, that bears thee forward, prove  
not, soon  
Or late, a perilous master. He—who oft,  
Beneath the battlements and stately trees  
That round his mansion cast a sober gloom,  
Had moralised on this, and other truths  
Of kindred import, pleased and satisfied—  
Was forced to vent his wisdom with a sigh  
Heaved from the heart in fortune's bitter-  
ness,

When he had crushed a plentiful estate  
By ruinous contest, to obtain a seat  
In Britain's senate. Fruitless was the at-  
tempt:  
And while the uproar of that desperate strife  
Continued yet to vibrate on his ear,  
The vanquished Whig, under a borrowed  
name,  
(For the mere sound and echo of his own  
Haunted him with sensations of disgust  
That he was glad to lose) slunk from the  
world  
To the deep shade of those untravelled  
Wilds;  
In which the Scottish Laird had long pos-  
sessed  
An undisturbed abode. Here, then, they  
met,  
Two doughty champions; flaming Jacobite  
And sullen Hanoverian! You might think  
That losses and vexations, less severe  
Than those which they had severally sus-  
tained,  
Would have inclined each to abate his zeal  
For his ungrateful cause; no,—I have  
heard  
My reverend Father tell that, 'mid the calm  
Of that small town encountering thus, they  
filled,  
Daily, its bowling-green with harmless  
strife;  
Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the  
church;  
And vexed the market-place. But in the  
breasts  
Of these opponents gradually was wrought,  
With little change of general sentiment,  
Such leaning towards each other, that their  
days  
By choice were spent in constant fellowship;  
And if, at times, they fretted with the yoke,  
Those very bickerings made them love it  
more.

A favourite boundary to their lengthened  
walks  
This Churchyard was. And, whether they  
had come  
Treading their path in sympathy and linked  
In social converse, or by some short space  
Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,  
One spirit seldom failed to extend its sway  
Over both minds, when they awhile had  
marked

The visible quiet of this holy ground,  
And breathed its soothing air:—the spirit  
of hope

And saintly magnanimity; that—spurning  
The field of selfish difference and dispute,  
And every care which transitory things,  
Earth and the kingdoms of the earth,  
create—

Doth, by a rapture of forgetfulness,  
Preclude forgiveness, from the praise de-  
barred,

Which else the Christian virtue might have  
claimed.

There live who yet remember here to  
have seen

Their courtly figures, seated on the stump  
Of an old yew, their favourite resting-place.  
But as the remnant of the long-lived tree  
Was disappearing by a swift decay,  
They, with joint care, determined to erect,  
Upon its site, a dial, that might stand  
For public use preserved, and thus survive  
As their own private monument: for this  
Was the particular spot, in which they  
wished

(And Heaven was pleased to accomplish  
the desire)

That, undivided, their remains should lie.  
So, where the mouldered tree had stood,  
was raised

Yon structure, framing, with the ascent of  
steps

That to the decorated pillar lead,  
A work of art more sumptuous than might  
seem

To suit this place; yet built in no proud  
scorn

Of rustic homeliness; they only aimed  
To ensure for it respectful guardianship.  
Around the margin of the plate, whereon  
The shadow falls to note the stealthy hours,  
Winds an inscriptive legend."—At these  
words

Thither we turned; and gathered, as we  
read,

The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers  
couched :

*'Time flies; it is his melancholy task,  
To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,  
And re-produce the troubles he destroys.  
But, while his blindness thus is occupied,  
Discerning Mortal! do thou serve the will  
Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,*

*Which the world wants, shall be for thee  
confirmed!'*

"Smooth verse, inspired by no unlettered  
Muse,"

Exclaimed the Sceptic, "and the strain of  
thought

Accords with nature's language;—the soft  
voice

Of yon white torrent falling down the rocks  
Speaks, less distinctly, to the same effect.

If, then, their blended influence be not lost  
Upon our hearts, not wholly lost, I grant,  
Even upon mine, the more are we required  
To feel for those among our fellow-men,  
Who, offering no obeisance to the world,  
Are yet made desperate by 'too quick a  
sense

Of constant infelicity,' cut off

From peace like exiles on some barren rock,  
Their life's appointed prison; not more free  
Than sentinels, between two armies, set,  
With nothing better, in the chill night air,  
Than their own thoughts to comfort them.

Say why

That ancient story of Prometheus chained  
To the bare rock, on frozen Caucasus;  
The vulture, the inexhaustible repast  
Drawn from his vitals? Say what meant  
the woes

By Tantalus entailed upon his race,  
And the dark sorrows of the line of Thebes?  
Fictions in form, but in their substance  
truths,

Tremendous truths! familiar to the men  
Of long-past times, nor obsolete in ours.  
Exchange the shepherd's frock of native  
grey

For robes with regal purple tinged; convert  
The crook into a sceptre; give the pomp  
Of circumstance; and here the tragic Muse  
Shall find apt subjects for her highest art.  
Amid the groves, under the shadowy hills,  
The generations are prepared; the pangs,  
The internal pangs, are ready; the dread  
strife

Of poor humanity's afflicted will  
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."

"Though," said the Priest in answer,  
"these be terms

Which a divine philosophy rejects,  
We, whose established and unailing trust  
Is in controlling Providence, admit

That, through all stations, human life  
abounds

With mysteries;—for, if Faith were left  
untried,

How could the might, that lurks within her,  
then

Be shown? her glorious excellence—that  
ranks

Among the first of Powers and Virtues—  
proved?

Our system is not fashioned to preclude  
That sympathy which you for others ask;  
And I could tell, not travelling for my  
theme

Beyond these humble graves, of grievous  
crimes

And strange disasters; but I pass them by,  
Loth to disturb what Heaven hath hushed  
in peace.

—Still less, far less, am I inclined to treat  
Of Man degraded in his Maker's sight  
By the deformities of brutish vice:

For, in such portraits, though a vulgar face  
And a coarse outside of repulsive life  
And unassuming manners might at once  
Be recognised by all"—"Ah! do not  
think,"

The Wanderer somewhat eagerly exclaimed,  
"Wish could be ours that you, for such  
poor gain,

(Gain shall I call it?—gain of what?—for  
whom?)

Should breathe a word tending to violate  
Your own pure spirit. Not a step we look  
for

In slight of that forbearance and reserve  
Which common human-heartedness in-  
spires,

And mortal ignorance and frailty claim,  
Upon this sacred ground, if nowhere else."

"True," said the Solitary, "be it far  
From us to infringe the laws of charity.  
Let judgment here in mercy be pronounced;  
This, self-respecting Nature prompts, and  
this

Wisdom enjoins; but if the thing we seek  
Be genuine knowledge, bear we then in mind  
How, from his lofty throne, the sun can  
fling

Colours as bright on exhalations bred  
By weedy pool or pestilential swamp,  
As by the rivulet sparkling where it runs,  
Or the pellucid lake."

"Small risk," said I,

"Of such illusion do we here incur;  
Temptation here is none to exceed the  
truth;

No evidence appears that they who rest  
Within this ground, were covetous of  
praise,

Or of remembrance even, deserved or not.  
Green is the Churchyard, beautiful and  
green,

Ridge rising gently by the side of ridge,  
A heaving surface, almost wholly free  
From interruption of sepulchral stones,  
And mantled o'er with aboriginal turf  
And everlasting flowers. These Dalesmen  
trust

The lingering gleam of their departed lives  
To oral record, and the silent heart;  
Depositories faithful and more kind  
Than fondest epitaph: for, if those fail,  
What boots the sculptured tomb? And  
who can blame,

Who rather would not envy, men that feel  
This mutual confidence; if, from such  
source,

The practice flow,—if thence, or from a  
deep

And general humility in death?  
Nor should I much condemn it, if it spring  
From disregard of time's destructive power,  
As only capable to prey on things  
Of earth, and human nature's mortal part.

Yet—in less simple districts, where we  
see

Stone lift its forehead emulous of stone  
In courting notice; and the ground all  
paved

With commendations of departed worth;  
Reading, where'er we turn, of innocent  
lives,

Of each domestic charity fulfilled,  
And sufferings meekly borne—I, for my  
part,

Though with the silence pleased that here  
prevails,

Among those fair recitals also range,  
Soothed by the natural spirit which they  
breathe.

And, in the centre of a world whose soil  
Is rank with all unkindness, compassed  
round

With such memorials, I have sometimes  
felt,

It was no momentary happiness  
To have *one* Enclosure where the voice that  
speaks

In envy or detraction is not heard;  
Which malice may not enter; where the  
traces

Of evil inclinations are unknown;  
Where love and pity tenderly unite  
With resignation; and no jarring tone  
Intrudes, the peaceful concert to disturb  
Of amity and gratitude."

"Thus sanctioned,"  
The Pastor said, "I willingly confine  
My narratives to subjects that excite  
Feelings with these accordant; love, es-  
teem,

And admiration; lifting up a veil,  
A sunbeam introducing among hearts  
Retired and covert; so that ye shall have  
Clear images before your gladdened eyes  
Of nature's unambitious underwood,  
And flowers that prosper in the shade.

And when  
I speak of such among my flock as swerved  
Or fell, those only shall be singled out  
Upon whose lapse, or error, something  
more

Than brotherly forgiveness may attend;  
To such will we restrict our notice, else  
Better my tongue were mute.

And yet there are,  
I feel, good reasons why we should not  
leave

Wholly untraced a more forbidding way.  
For, strength to persevere and to support,  
And energy to conquer and repel—  
These elements of virtue, that declare  
The native grandeur of the human soul—  
Are oft-times not unprofitably shown  
In the perverseness of a selfish course:  
Truth every day exemplified, no less  
In the grey cottage by the murmuring  
stream

Than in fantastic conqueror's roving camp,  
Or 'mid the factious senate, unappalled  
Whoe'er may sink, or rise—to sink again,  
As merciless proscription ebbs and flows.

There," said the Vicar, pointing as he  
spoke,

"A woman rests in peace; surpassed by  
few

In power of mind, and eloquent discourse.  
Tall was her stature; her complexion dark

And saturnine; her head not raised to hold  
Converse with heaven, nor yet deprest to-  
wards earth,

But in projection carried, as she walked  
For ever musing. Sunken were her eyes;  
Wrinkled and furrowed with habitual  
thought

Was her broad forehead; like the brow of  
one

Whose visual nerve shrinks from a painful  
glare

Of overpowering light.—While yet a child,  
She, 'mid the humble flowerets of the vale,  
Towered like the imperial thistle, not  
unfurnished

With its appropriate grace, yet rather  
seeking

To be admired, than coveted and loved.  
Even at that age she ruled, a sovereign  
queen,

Over her comrades; else their simple sports,  
Wanting all relish for her strenuous mind,  
Had crossed her only to be shunned with  
scorn.

—Oh! pang of sorrowful regret for those  
Whom, in their youth, sweet study has  
enthralled,

That they have lived for harsher servitude,  
Whether in soul, in body, or estate!  
Such doom was hers; yet nothing could  
subdue

Her keen desire of knowledge, nor efface  
Those brighter images by books imprest  
Upon her memory, faithfully as stars  
That occupy their places, and, though oft  
Hidden by clouds, and oft bedimmed by  
haze,

Are not to be extinguished, nor impaired.

Two passions, both degenerate, for they  
both

Began in honour, gradually obtained  
Rule over her, and vexed her daily life;  
An unremitting, avaricious thrift;  
And a strange thralldom of maternal love,  
That held her spirit, in its own despite,  
Bound—by vexation, and regret, and scorn,  
Constrained forgiveness, and relenting vows,  
And tears, in pride suppressed, in shame  
concealed—

To a poor dissolute Son, her only child.  
—Her wedded days had opened with mishap,  
Whence dire dependence. What could she  
perform



To shake the burthen off? Ah! there was felt,  
Indignantly, the weakness of her sex.  
She mused, resolved, adhered to her resolve;  
The hand grew slack in alms-giving, the heart  
Closed by degrees to charity; heaven's blessing  
Not seeking from that source, she placed her trust  
In ceaseless pains—and strictest parsimony  
Which sternly hoarded all that could be spared,  
From each day's need, out of each day's least gain.

Thus all was re-established, and a pile  
Constructed, that sufficed for every end,  
Save the contentment of the builder's mind;  
A mind by nature indisposed to aught  
So placid, so inactive, as content;  
A mind intolerant of lasting peace,  
And cherishing the pang her heart deplored.  
Dread life of conflict! which I oft compared  
To the agitation of a brook that runs  
Down a rocky mountain, buried now and lost  
In silent pools, now in strong eddies  
chained;  
But never to be charmed to gentleness:  
Its best attainment fits of such repose  
As timid eyes might shrink from fathoming.

A sudden illness seized her in the strength  
Of life's autumnal season.—Shall I tell  
How on her bed of death the Matron lay,  
To Providence submissive, so she thought;  
But fretted, vexed, and wrought upon,  
almost  
To anger, by the malady that griped  
Her prostrate frame with unrelaxing power,  
As the fierce eagle fastens on the lamb?  
She prayed, she moaned;—her husband's sister watched  
Her dreary pillow, waited on her needs;  
And yet the very sound of that kind foot  
Was anguish to her ears! 'And must she rule,'  
This was the death-doomed Woman heard to say  
In bitterness, 'and must she rule and reign,  
'Sole Mistress of this house, when I am gone?

'Tend what I tended, calling it her own!'  
Enough;—I fear, too much.—One vernal evening,  
While she was yet in prime of health and strength,  
I well remember, while I passed her door  
Alone, with loitering step, and upward eye  
'Turned towards the planet Jupiter that hung  
Above the centre of the Vale, a voice  
Roused me, her voice; it said, 'That glorious star  
'In its untroubled element will shine  
'As now it shines, when we are laid in earth  
'And safe from all our sorrows.' With a sigh  
She spake, yet, I believe, not unsustained  
By faith in glory that shall far transcend  
Aught by these perishable heavens disclosed  
To sight or mind. Nor less than care divine  
Is divine mercy. She, who had rebelled,  
Was into meekness softened and subdued;  
Did, after trials not in vain prolonged,  
With resignation sink into the grave;  
And her uncharitable acts, I trust,  
And harsh unkindnesses are all forgiven,  
Tho', in this Vale, remembered with deep awe."

THE Vicar paused; and toward a seat advanced,  
A long stone-seat, fixed in the Churchyard wall;  
Part shaded by cool sycamore, and part  
Offering a sunny resting-place to them  
Who seek the House of worship, while the bells  
Yet ring with all their voices, or before  
The last hath ceased its solitary knoll.  
Beneath the shade we all sate down; and there,  
His office, uninvited, he resumed.

"As on a sunny bank, a tender lamb  
Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of March,  
Screened by its parent, so that little mound  
Lies guarded by its neighbour; the small heap  
Speaks for itself; an Infant there doth rest;  
The sheltering hillock is the Mother's grave.

If mild discourse, and manners that conferred

A natural dignity on humblest rank;  
If gladsome spirits, and benignant looks,  
That for a face not beautiful did more  
Than beauty for the fairest face can do;  
And if religious tenderness of heart,  
Grieving for sin, and penitential tears  
Shed when the clouds had gathered and  
distained

The spotless ether of a maiden life;  
If these may make a hallowed spot of earth  
More holy in the sight of God or Man;  
Then, o'er that mould, a sanctity shall  
brood  
Till the stars sicken at the day of doom.

Ah! what a warning for a thoughtless  
man,  
Could field or grove, could any spot of  
earth,  
Show to his eye an image of the pangs  
Which it hath witnessed; render back an  
echo

Of the sad steps by which it hath been trod!  
There, by her innocent Baby's precious  
grave,

And on the very turf that roofs her own,  
The Mother oft was seen to stand, or kneel  
In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.  
Now she is not; the swelling turf reports  
Of the fresh shower, but of poor Ellen's  
tears

Is silent; nor is any vestige left  
Of the path worn by mournful tread of her  
Who, at her heart's light bidding, once had  
moved

In virgin fearlessness, with step that seemed  
Caught from the pressure of elastic turf  
Upon the mountains gemmed with morning  
dew,

In the prime hour of sweetest scents and airs.  
—Serious and thoughtful was her mind;  
and yet,

By reconciliation exquisite and rare,  
The form, port, motions, of this Cottage-  
girl

Were such as might have quickened and  
inspired

A Titian's hand, address to picture forth  
Oread or Dryad glancing through the shade  
What time the hunter's earliest horn is  
heard

Startling the golden hills.

A wide-spread elm  
Stands in our valley, named THE JOYFUL  
TREE;

From dateless usage which our peasants  
hold

Of giving welcome to the first of May  
By dances round its trunk.—And if the sky  
Permit, like honours, dance and song, are  
paid

To the Twelfth Night, beneath the frosty  
stars

Or the clear moon. The queen of these  
gay sports,

If not in beauty yet in sprightly air,  
Was hapless Ellen.—No one touched the  
ground

So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks  
Less gracefully were braided;—but this  
praise,

Methinks, would better suit another place.

She loved, and fondly deemed herself  
beloved.

—The road is dim, the current unperceived,  
The weakness painful and most pitiful,  
By which a virtuous woman, in pure youth,  
May be delivered to distress and shame.

Such fate was hers.—The last time Ellen  
danced,

Among her equals, round THE JOYFUL  
TREE,

She bore a secret burthen; and full soon  
Was left to tremble for a breaking vow,—  
Then, to bewail a sternly-broken vow,  
Alone, within her widowed Mother's house.  
It was the season of unfolding leaves,  
Of days advancing toward their utmost  
length,

And small birds singing happily to mates  
Happy as they. With spirit-saddening  
power

Winds pipe through fading woods; but  
those blithe notes

Strike the deserted to the heart; I speak  
Of what I know, and what we feel within.

—Beside the cottage in which Ellen dwelt  
Stands a tall ash-tree; to whose topmost  
twig

A thrush resorts, and annually chants,  
At morn and evening from that naked  
perch,

While all the undergrove is thick with  
leaves,

A time-beguiling ditty, for delight

Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.

—‘Ah why,’ said Ellen, sighing to herself,  
‘Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn  
pledge;

‘And nature that is kind in woman’s breast,  
‘And reason that in man is wise and good,  
‘And fear of him who is a righteous judge;  
‘Why do not these prevail for human life,  
‘To keep two hearts together, that began  
‘Their spring-time with one love, and that  
have need

‘Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet  
‘To grant, or be received; while that poor  
bird—

‘O come and hear him! Thou who hast  
to me

‘Been faithless, hear him, though a lowly  
creature,

‘One of God’s simple children that yet know  
not

‘The universal Parent, how he sings  
‘As if he wished the firmament of heaven  
‘Should listen, and give back to him the  
voice

‘Of his triumphant constancy and love;  
‘The proclamation that he makes, how far  
‘His darkness doth transcend our fickle  
light!’

Such was the tender passage, not by me  
Repeated without loss of simple phrase,  
Which I perused, even as the words had  
been

Committed by forsaken Ellen’s hand  
To the blank margin of a Valentine,  
Bedropped with tears. ‘Twill please you  
to be told

That, studiously withdrawing from the eye  
Of all companionship, the Sufferer yet  
In lonely reading found a meek resource:  
How thankful for the warmth of summer  
days,

When she could slip into the cottage-barn,  
And find a secret oratory there;  
Or, in the garden, under friendly veil  
Of their long twilight, pore upon her book  
By the last lingering help of the open sky  
Until dark night dismissed her to her bed!  
Thus did a waking fancy sometimes lose  
The unconquerable pang of despised love.

A kindlier passion opened on her soul  
When that poor Child was born. Upon  
its face

She gazed as on a pure and spotless gift  
Of unexpected promise, where a grief  
Or dread was all that had been thought of,  
—joy

Far livelier than bewildered traveller feels,  
Amid a perilous waste that all night long  
Hath harassed him toiling through fearful  
storm,

When he beholds the first pale speck serene  
Of day-spring, in the gloomy east, revealed,  
And greets it with thanksgiving. ‘Till  
this hour,’

Thus, in her Mother’s hearing Ellen spake,  
‘There was a stony region in my heart;  
‘But He, at whose command the parched  
rock

‘Was smitten, and poured forth a quench-  
ing stream,

‘Hath softened that obduracy, and made  
‘Unlooked-for gladness in the desert  
place,

‘To save the perishing; and, henceforth,  
I breathe

‘The air with cheerful spirit, for thy sake  
‘My infant! and for that good Mother  
dear,

‘Who bore me; and hath prayed for me  
in vain;—

‘Yet not in vain; it shall not be in vain.’  
She spake, nor was the assurance unful-  
filled;

And if heart-rending thoughts would oft  
return,

They stayed not long.—The blameless  
Infant grew

The Child whom Ellen and her Mother  
loved

They soon were proud of; tended it and  
nursed;

A soothing comforter, although forlorn;  
Like a poor singing-bird from distant  
lands;

Or a choice shrub, which he, who passes  
by

With vacant mind, not seldom may observe  
Fair-flowering in a thinly-peopled house,  
Whose window, somewhat sadly, it adorns.

Through four months’ space the Infant  
drew its food

From the maternal breast; then scruples  
rose;

Thoughts, which the rich are free from,  
came and crossed

The fond affection. She no more could bear  
By her offence to lay a twofold weight  
On a kind parent willing to forget  
Their slender means : so, to that parent's  
care

Trusting her child, she left their common  
home,

And undertook with dutiful content  
A Foster-mother's office.

'Tis, perchance,  
Unknown to you that in these simple vales  
The natural feeling of equality  
Is by domestic service unimpaired ;  
Yet, though such service be, with us,  
removed

From sense of degradation, not the less  
The ungentle mind can easily find means  
To impose severe restraints and laws un-  
just,

Which hapless Ellen now was doomed to  
feel :

For (blinded by an over-anxious dread  
Of such excitement and divided thought  
As with her office would but ill accord)  
The pair, whose infant she was bound to  
nurse,

Forbade her all communion with her own :  
Week after week, the mandate they en-  
forced.

—So near ! yet not allowed, upon that sight  
To fix her eyes—alas ! 'twas hard to bear !  
But worse affliction must be borne—far  
worse ;

For 'tis Heaven's will—that, after a disease  
Begun and ended within three days' space,  
Her child should die ; as Ellen now ex-  
claimed,

Her own—deserted child !—Once, only  
once,

She saw it in that mortal malady ;  
And, on the burial-day, could scarcely gain  
Permission to attend its obsequies.

She reached the house, last of the funeral  
train ;

And some one, as she entered, having  
chanced

To urge unthinkingly their prompt depart-  
ure,

'Nay,' said she, with commanding look,  
a spirit

Of anger never seen in her before,

'Nay, ye must wait my time !' and down  
she sate,

And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat

Weeping and looking, looking on and  
weeping,

Upon the last sweet slumber of her Child,  
Until at length her soul was satisfied.

You see the Infant's Grave ; and to this  
spot,

The Mother, oft as she was sent abroad,  
On whatsoever errand, urged her steps :  
Hither she came ; here stood, and some-  
times knelt

In the broad day, a rueful Magdalene !  
So call her ; for not only she bewailed  
A mother's loss, but mourned in bitterness  
Her own transgression ; penitent sincere  
As ever raised to heaven a streaming eye ?  
—At length the parents of the foster-child,  
Noting that in despite of their commands  
She still renewed and could not but renew  
Those visitations, ceased to send her forth ;  
Or, to the garden's narrow bounds, con-  
fined.

I failed not to remind them that they erred ;  
For holy Nature might not thus be crossed,  
Thus wronged in woman's breast : in vain  
I pleaded—

But the green stalk of Ellen's life was  
snapped,

And the flower drooped ; as every eye  
could see,

It hung its head in mortal languishment.

—Aided by this appearance, I at length  
Prevailed ; and, from those bonds released,  
she went

Home to her mother's house.

The Youth was fled ;  
The rash betrayer could not face the shame  
Or sorrow which his senseless guilt had  
caused ;

And little would his presence, or proof  
given

Of a relenting soul, have now availed ;  
For, like a shadow, he was passed away  
From Ellen's thoughts ; had perished to  
her mind

For all concerns of fear, or hope, or love,  
Save only those which to their common  
shame,

And to his moral being appertained :  
Hope from that quarter would, I know,  
have brought

A heavenly comfort ; there she recognised  
An unrelaxing bond, a mutual need ;

There, and, as seemed, there only.

She had built,  
Her fond maternal heart had built, a nest  
In blindness all too near the river's edge ;  
That work a summer flood with hasty swell  
Had swept away ; and now her Spirit longed  
For its last flight to heaven's security.

—The bodily frame wasted from day to day ;  
Meanwhile, relinquishing all other cares,  
Her mind she strictly tutored to find peace  
And pleasure in endurance. Much she  
thought,

And much she read ; and brooded feelingly  
Upon her own unworthiness. To me,  
As to a spiritual comforter and friend,  
Her heart she opened ; and no pains were  
spared

To mitigate, as gently as I could,  
The sting of self-reproach, with healing  
words.

Meek Saint ! through patience glorified on  
earth !

In whom, as by her lonely hearth she sate,  
The ghastly face of cold decay put on  
A sun-like beauty, and appeared divine !  
May I not mention—that, within those  
walls,

In due observance of her pious wish,  
The congregation joined with me in prayer  
For her soul's good ? Nor was that office  
vain.

—Much did she suffer : but, if any friend,  
Beholding her condition, at the sight  
Gave way to words of pity or complaint,  
She stilled them with a prompt reproof,  
and said,

' He who afflicts me knows what I can bear ;  
' And, when I fail, and can endure no more,  
' Will mercifully take me to himself.'

So, through the cloud of death, her Spirit  
passed

Into that pure and unknown world of love  
Where injury cannot come :—and here is  
laid

The mortal Body by her Infant's side. "

The Vicar ceased ; and downcast looks  
made known

That each had listened with his inmost  
heart.

For me, the emotion scarcely was less  
strong

Or less benign than that which I had felt  
When seated near my venerable Friend,  
Under those shady elms, from him I heard

The story that retraced the slow decline  
Of Margaret, sinking on the lonely heath  
With the neglected house to which she  
clung.

—I noted that the Solitary's cheek  
Confessed the power of nature.—Pleased  
though sad,

More pleased than sad, the grey-haired  
Wanderer sate ;

Thanks to his pure imaginative soul  
Capacious and serene ; his blameless life,  
His knowledge, wisdom, love of truth, and  
love

Of human kind ! He was it who first broke  
The pensive silence, saying :—

" Blest are they  
Whose sorrow rather is to suffer wrong  
Than to do wrong, albeit themselves have  
erred.

This tale gives proof that Heaven most  
gently deals

With such, in their affliction.—Ellen's fate,  
Her tender spirit, and her contrite heart,  
Call to my mind dark hints which I have  
heard

Of one who died within this vale, by doom  
Heavier, as his offence was heavier far.

Where, Sir, I pray you, where are laid the  
bones

Of Wilfrid Armathwaite ? "

The Vicar answered,  
" In that green nook, close by the Church-  
yard wall,

Beneath yon hawthorn, planted by myself  
In memory and for warning, and in sign  
Of sweetness where dire anguish had been  
known,

Of reconciliation after deep offence—  
There doth he rest. No theme his fate  
supplies

For the smooth glozings of the indulgent  
world ;

Nor need the windings of his devious course  
Be here retraced ;—enough that, by mishap  
And venial error, robbed of competence,  
And her obsequious shadow, peace of mind,  
He craved a substitute in troubled joy ;  
Against his conscience rose in arms, and,  
braving

Divine displeasure, broke the marriage-vow.  
That which he had been weak enough to do  
Was misery in remembrance ; he was stung.  
Stung by his inward thoughts, and by the  
smiles

Of wife and children stung to agony.  
 Wretched at home, he gained no peace  
     abroad ;  
 Ranged through the mountains, slept upon  
     the earth,  
 Asked comfort of the open air, and found  
 No quiet in the darkness of the night,  
 No pleasure in the beauty of the day.  
 His flock he slighted : his paternal fields  
 Became a clog to him, whose spirit wished  
 To fly—but whither ! And this gracious  
     Church,  
 That wears a look so full of peace and hope  
 And love, benignant mother of the vale,  
 How fair amid her brood of cottages !  
 She was to him a sickness and reproach.  
 Much to the last remained unknown : but  
     this  
 Is sure, that through remorse and grief he  
     died ;  
 Though pitied among men, absolved by  
     God,  
 He could not find forgiveness in himself ;  
 Nor could endure the weight of his own  
     shame.

Here rests a Mother. But from her I  
     turn  
 And from her grave.—Behold—upon that  
     ridge,  
 That, stretching boldly from the mountain  
     side,  
 Carries into the centre of the vale  
 Its rocks and woods—the Cottage where  
     she dwelt  
 And where yet dwells her faithful Partner,  
     left  
 (Full eight years past) the solitary prop  
 Of many helpless Children. I begin  
 With words that might be prelude to a tale  
 Of sorrow and dejection ; but I feel  
 No sadness, when I think of what mine eyes  
 See daily in that happy family.  
 —Bright garland form they for the pensive  
     brow  
 Of their undrooping Father's widowhood,  
 Those six fair Daughters, budding yet—  
     not one,  
 Not one of all the band, a full-blown flower.  
 Deprest, and desolate of soul, as once  
 That Father was, and filled with anxious  
     fear,  
 Now, by experience taught, he stands as-  
     sured,

That God, who takes away, yet takes not  
     half  
 Of what he seems to take ; or gives it back,  
 Not to our prayer, but far beyond our  
     prayer ;  
 He gives it—the boon produce of a soil  
 Which our endeavours have refused to till,  
 And hope hath never watered. The Abode,  
 Whose grateful owner can attest these  
     truths,  
 Even were the object nearer to our sight,  
 Would seem in no distinction to surpass  
 The rudest habitations. Ye might think  
 That it had sprung self-raised from earth,  
     or grown  
 Out of the living rock, to be adorned  
 By nature only ; but, if thither led,  
 Ye would discover, then, a studious work  
 Of many fancies, prompting many hands.

Brought from the woods the honeysuckle  
     twines  
 Around the porch, and seems, in that trim  
     place,  
 A plant no longer wild ; the cultured rose  
 There blossoms, strong in health, and will  
     be soon  
 Roof-high ; the wild pink crowns the  
     garden-wall,  
 And with the flowers are intermingled  
     stones  
 Sparry and bright, rough scatterings of  
     the hills.  
 These ornaments, that fade not with the  
     year,  
 A hardy Girl continues to provide ;  
 Who, mounting fearlessly the rocky heights,  
 Her Father's prompt attendant, does for  
     him  
 All that a boy could do, but with delight  
 More keen and prouder daring ; yet hath  
     she,  
 Within the garden, like the rest, a bed  
 For her own flowers and favourite herbs,  
     a space,  
 By sacred charter, holden for her use.  
 —These, and whatever else the garden  
     bears  
 Of fruit or flower, permission asked or not,  
 I freely gather ; and my leisure draws  
 A not unfrequent pastime from the hum  
 Of bees around their range of sheltered  
     hives  
 Busy in that enclosure ; while the rill,

That sparkling thrids the rocks, attunes  
his voice  
To the pure course of human life which  
there  
Flows on in solitude. But, when the gloom  
Of night is falling round my steps, then  
most  
This Dwelling charms me; often I stop  
short,  
(Who could refrain?) and feed by stealth  
my sight  
With prospect of the company within,  
Laid open through the blazing window :—  
there  
I see the eldest Daughter at her wheel  
Spinning amain, as if to overtake  
The never-halting time; or, in her turn,  
Teaching some Novice of the sisterhood  
That skill in this or other household work,  
Which, from her Father's honoured hand,  
herself,  
While she was yet a little-one, had learned.  
Mild Man! he is not gay, but they are  
gay;  
And the whole house seems filled with  
gaiety.  
—Thrice happy, then, the Mother may be  
deemed,  
The Wife, from whose consolatory grave  
I turned, that ye in mind might witness  
where,  
And how, her Spirit yet survives on earth !"

## BOOK SEVENTH

THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE  
MOUNTAINS—(continued)

## ARGUMENT

Impression of these Narratives upon the Author's  
mind—Pastor invited to give account of certain  
Graves that lie apart—Clergyman and his Family  
—Fortunate influence of change of situation—  
Activity in extreme old age—Another Clergyman,  
a character of resolute Virtue—Lamentations over  
misdirected applause—Instance of less exalted  
excellence in a deaf man—Elevated character of  
a blind man—Reflection upon Blindness—Inter-  
rupted by a Peasant who passes—His animal  
cheerfulness and careless vivacity—He occasions  
a digression on the fall of beautiful and interesting  
Trees—A female Infant's Grave—Joy at her  
Birth—Sorrow at her Departure—A youthful

Peasant—His patriotic enthusiasm and distin-  
guished qualities—His untimely death—Exulta-  
tion of the Wanderer, as a patriot, in this Picture  
—Solitary how affected—Monument of a Knight  
—Traditions concerning him—Peroration of the  
Wanderer on the transitoriness of things and the  
revolutions of society—Hints at his own past  
Calling—Thanks the Pastor.

WHILE thus from theme to theme the  
Historian passed,

The words he uttered, and the scene that lay  
Before our eyes, awakened in my mind  
Vivid remembrance of those long-past  
hours;

When, in the hollow of some shadowy vale,  
(What time the splendour of the setting  
sun

Lay beautiful on Snowdon's sovereign brow,  
On Cader Idris, or huge Penmanmaur)  
A wandering Youth, I listened with delight  
To pastoral melody or warlike air,  
Drawn from the chords of the ancient British  
harp

By some accomplished Master, while he sate  
Amid the quiet of the green recess,  
And there did inexhaustibly dispense  
An interchange of soft or solemn tunes,  
Tender or blithe; now, as the varying  
mood

Of his own spirit urged,—now, as a voice  
From youth or maiden, or some honoured  
chief

Of his compatriot villagers (that hung  
Around him, drinking in the impassioned  
notes

Of the time-hallowed minstrelsy) required  
For their heart's ease or pleasure. Strains  
of power

Were they, to seize and occupy the sense;  
But to a higher mark than song can reach  
Rose this pure eloquence. And, when the  
stream

Which overflowed the soul was passed  
away,

A consciousness remained that it had left,  
Deposited upon the silent shore  
Of memory, images and precious thoughts,  
That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed.

"These grassy heaps lie amicably close,"  
Said I, "like surges heaving in the wind  
Along the surface of a mountain pool:  
Whence comes it, then, that yonder we  
behold

Five graves, and only five, that rise together  
 Unsociably sequestered, and encroaching  
 On the smooth playground of the village-school?"

The Vicar answered,—“No disdainful pride

In them who rest beneath, nor any course  
 Of strange or tragic accident, hath helped  
 To place those hillocks in that lonely guise.  
 —Once more look forth, and follow with  
 your sight

The length of road that from yon mountain's  
 base

Through bare enclosures stretches, 'till its  
 line

Is lost within a little tuft of trees;  
 Then, reappearing in a moment, quits  
 The cultured fields; and up the heathy  
 waste,

Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine,  
 Led towards an easy outlet of the vale.  
 That little shady spot, that sylvan tuft,  
 By which the road is hidden, also hides  
 A cottage from our view; though I discern  
 (Ye scarcely can) amid its sheltering trees  
 The smokeless chimney-top. —

All unembowered  
 And naked stood that lowly Parsonage  
 (For such in truth it is, and appertains  
 To a small Chapel in the vale beyond)  
 When hither came its last Inhabitant.  
 Rough and forbidding were the choicest  
 roads

By which our northern wilds could then be  
 crossed;

And into most of these secluded vales  
 Was no access for wain, heavy or light.  
 So, at his dwelling-place the Priest arrived  
 With store of household goods, in panniers  
 slung

On sturdy horses graced with jingling bells,  
 And on the back of more ignoble beast;  
 That, with like burthen of effects most  
 prized

Or easiest carried, closed the motley train.  
 Young was I then, a schoolboy of eight  
 years;

But still, methinks, I see them as they  
 passed

In order, drawing toward their wished-for  
 home.

—Rocked by the motion of a trusty ass

Two ruddy children hung, a well-poised  
 freight,

Each in his basket nodding drowsily;  
 Their bonnets, I remember, wreathed with  
 flowers,

Which told it was the pleasant month of  
 June;

And, close behind, the comely Matron rode,  
 A woman of soft speech and gracious smile,  
 And with a lady's mien.—From far they  
 came,

Even from Northumbrian hills; yet theirs  
 had been

A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheered  
 By music, prank, and laughter-stirring jest;  
 And freak put on, and arch word dropped  
 —to swell

The cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise  
 That gathered round the slowly-moving  
 train.

—‘Whence do they come? and with what  
 errand charged?

‘Belong they to the fortune-telling tribe  
 ‘Who pitch their tents under the green-  
 wood tree?

‘Or Strollers are they, furnished to enact  
 ‘Fair Rosamond, and the Children of the  
 Wood,

‘And, by that whiskered tabby's aid, set  
 forth

‘The lucky venture of sage Whittington,  
 ‘When the next village hears the show  
 announced

‘By blast of trumpet?’ Plenteous was the  
 growth

Of such conjectures, overheard, or seen  
 On many a staring countenance portrayed  
 Of boor or burgher, as they marched along.  
 And more than once their steadiness of face  
 Was put to proof, and exercise supplied  
 To their inventive humour, by stern looks,  
 And questions in authoritative tone,  
 From some staid guardian of the public  
 peace,

Checking the sober steed on which he rode,  
 In his suspicious wisdom; oftener still,  
 By notice indirect, or blunt demand  
 From traveller halting in his own despite,  
 A simple curiosity to ease:

Of which adventures, that beguiled and  
 cheered

Their grave migration, the good pair would  
 tell,

With undiminished glee, in hoary age.



A Priest he was by function; but his  
 course  
 From his youth up, and high as manhood's  
 noon,  
 (The hour of life to which he then was  
 brought)  
 Had been irregular, I might say, wild;  
 By books unsteadied, by his pastoral care  
 Too little checked. An active, ardent  
 mind;  
 A fancy pregnant with resource and scheme  
 To cheat the sadness of a rainy day;  
 Hands apt for all ingenious arts and games;  
 A generous spirit, and a body strong  
 To cope with stoutest champions of the  
 bowl—  
 Had earned for him sure welcome, and the  
 rights  
 Of a prized visitant, in the jolly hall  
 Of country 'squire; or at the stater  
 board  
 Of duke or earl, from scenes of courtly  
 pomp  
 Withdrawn,—to while away the summer  
 hours  
 In condescension among rural guests.

With these high comrades he had revelled  
 long,  
 Frolicked industriously, a simple Clerk  
 By hopes of coming patronage beguiled  
 Till the heart sickened. So, each loftier  
 aim  
 Abandoning and all his showy friends,  
 For a life's stay (slender it was, but sure)  
 He turned to this secluded chapelry;  
 That had been offered to his doubtful  
 choice  
 By an unthought-of patron. Bleak and  
 bare  
 They found the cottage, their allotted  
 home;  
 Naked without, and rude within; a spot  
 With which the Cure not long had been  
 endowed:  
 And far remote the chapel stood,—remote,  
 And, from his Dwelling, unapproachable,  
 Save through a gap high in the hills, an  
 opening  
 Shadeless and shelterless, by driving  
 showers  
 Frequented, and beset with howling winds.  
 Yet cause was none, whate'er regret might  
 hang

On his own mind, to quarrel with the  
 choice  
 Or the necessity that fixed him here;  
 Apart from old temptations, and con-  
 strained  
 To punctual labour in his sacred charge.  
 See him a constant preacher to the poor!  
 And visiting, though not with saintly zeal,  
 Yet, when need was, with no reluctant will,  
 The sick in body, or distress in mind;  
 And, by a salutary change, compelled  
 To rise from timely sleep, and meet the day  
 With no engagement, in his thoughts,  
 more proud  
 Or splendid than his garden could afford,  
 His fields, or mountains by the heath-cock  
 ranged  
 Or the wild brooks; from which he now  
 returned  
 Contented to partake the quiet meal  
 Of his own board, where sat his gentle  
 Mate  
 And three fair Children, plentifully fed  
 Though simply, from their little household  
 farm;  
 Nor wanted timely treat of fish or fowl  
 By nature yielded to his practised hand;—  
 To help the small but certain comings-in  
 Of that spare benefice. Yet not the less  
 Theirs was a hospitable board, and theirs  
 A charitable door.

So days and years  
 Passed on;—the inside of that rugged  
 house  
 Was trimmed and brightened by the  
 Matron's care,  
 And gradually enriched with things of price,  
 Which might be lacked for use or ornament.  
 What, though no soft and costly sofa there  
 Insidiously stretched out its lazy length,  
 And no vain mirror glittered upon the walls,  
 Yet were the windows of the low abode  
 By shutters weather-fenced, which at once  
 Repelled the storm and deadened its loud  
 roar.  
 There snow-white curtains hung in decent  
 folds;  
 Tough moss, and long-enduring mountain  
 plants,  
 That creep along the ground with sinuous  
 trail,  
 Were nicely braided; and composed a work  
 Like Indian mats, that with appropriate  
 grace

Lay at the threshold and the inner doors ;  
And a fair carpet, woven of homespun  
wool

But tintured daintily with florid hues,  
For seemliness and warmth, on festal days,  
Covered the smooth blue slabs of mountain-  
stone

With which the parlour-floor, in simplest  
guise

Of pastoral homesteads, had been long  
inlaid,

Those pleasing works the Housewife's  
skill produced :

Meanwhile the unsedentary Master's hand  
Was busier with his task—to rid, to plant,  
To rear for food, for shelter, and delight ;  
A thriving covert ! And when wishes,  
formed

In youth, and sanctioned by the riper mind,  
Restored me to my native valley, here  
To end my days ; well pleased was I to see  
The once-bare cottage, on the mountain-  
side,

Screened from assault of every bitter blast ;  
While the dark shadows of the summer  
leaves

Danced in the breeze, chequering its mossy  
roof.

Time, which had thus afforded willing help  
To beautify with nature's fairest growths  
This rustic tenement, had gently shed,  
Upon its Master's frame, a wintry grace ;  
The comeliness of unenfeebled age.

But how could I say, gently ? for he still  
Retained a flashing eye, a burning palm,  
A stirring foot, a head which beat at nights  
Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.  
Few likings had he dropped, few pleasures  
lost ;

Generous and charitable, prompt to serve ;  
And still his harsher passions kept their  
hold—

Anger and indignation. Still he loved  
The sound of titled names, and talked in  
glee

Of long-past banquetings with high-born  
friends :

Then, from those lulling fits of vain delight  
Uproused by recollected injury, railed  
At their false ways disdainfully,—and oft  
In bitterness, and with a threatening eye  
Of fire, incensed beneath its hoary brow.

—Those transports, with staid looks of  
pure good-will,  
And with soft smile, his consort would  
reprove.

She, far behind him in the race of years,  
Yet keeping her first mildness, was advanced  
Far nearer, in the habit of her soul,  
To that still region whither all are bound,  
Him might we liken to the setting sun  
As seen not seldom on some gusty day,  
Struggling and bold, and shining from the  
west

With an inconstant and unmellowed light ;  
She was a soft attendant cloud, that hung  
As if with wish to veil the restless orb ;  
From which it did itself imbibe a ray  
Of pleasing lustre.—But no more of this ;  
I better love to sprinkle on the sod  
That now divides the pair, or rather say,  
That still unites them, praises, like heaven's  
dew,

Without reserve descending upon both.

Our very first in eminence of years  
This old Man stood, the patriarch of the  
Vale !

And, to his unmolested mansion, death  
Had never come, through space of forty  
years ;

Sparing both old and young in that abode.  
Suddenly then they disappeared : not twice  
Had summer scorched the fields ; not twice  
had fallen,

On those high peaks, the first autumnal  
snow,

Before the greedy visiting was closed,  
And the long-privileged house left empty—  
swept

As by a plague. Yet no rapacious plague  
Had been among them ; all was gentle  
death,

One after one, with intervals of peace.  
A happy consummation ! an accord  
Sweet, perfect, to be wished for ! save that  
here

Was something which to mortal sense might  
sound

Like harshness,—that the old grey-headed  
Sire,

The oldest, he was taken last ; survived  
When the meek Partner of his age, his Son,  
His Daughter, and that late and high-prized  
gift,

His little smiling Grandchild, were no more.

'All gone all vanished! he deprived and bare,  
'How will he face the remnant of his life?  
'What will become of him?' we said, and mused

In sad conjectures—'Shall we meet him now

'Haunting with rod and line the craggy brooks?

'Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,

'Striving to entertain the lonely hours

'With music?' (for he had not ceased to touch

The harp or viol which himself had framed,  
For their sweet purposes, with perfect skill.)

'What titles will he keep? will he remain

'Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,

'A planter, and a rearer from the seed?

'A man of hope and forward-looking mind

'Even to the last!'—Such was he, unsubdued. †

But Heaven was gracious; yet a little while,  
And this Survivor, with his cheerful throng  
Of open projects, and his inward hoard  
Of unsunned griefs, too many and too keen,  
Was overcome by unexpected sleep,  
In one blest moment. Like a shadow  
thrown

Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,  
Death fell upon him, while reclined he lay  
For noontide solace on the summer grass,  
The warm lap of his mother earth: and so,  
Their lenient term of separation past,  
That family (whose graves you there behold)  
By yet a higher privilege once more  
Were gathered to each other."

Calm of mind  
And silence waited on these closing words;  
Until the Wanderer (whether moved by  
fear

Lest in those passages of life were some  
That might have touched the sick heart of  
his Friend

Too nearly, or intent to reinforce  
His own firm spirit in degree deprest  
By tender sorrow for our mortal state)  
Thus silence broke:—"Behold a thought-  
less Man

From vice and premature decay preserved  
By useful habits, to a fitter soil  
Transplanted ere too late.—The hermit,  
lodged

Amid the untrodden desert, tells his beads,  
With each repeating its allotted prayer,

And thus divides and thus relieves the time;  
Smooth task, with *his* compared, whose  
mind could string,

Not scantily, bright minutes on the thread  
Of keen domestic anguish; and beguile  
A solitude, unchosen, unprofessed;  
Till gentlest death released him.

Far from us  
Be the desire—too curiously to ask  
How much of this is but the blind result  
Of cordial spirits and vital temperament,  
And what to higher powers is justly due.  
But you, Sir, know that in a neighbouring  
vale

A Priest abides before whose life such  
doubts

Fall to the ground; whose gifts of nature lie  
Retired from notice, lost in attributes  
Of reason, honourably effaced by debts  
Which her poor treasure-house is content  
to owe,

And conquest over her dominion gained,  
To which her frowardness must needs sub-  
mit.

In this one Man is shown a temperance—  
proof

Against all trials; industry severe  
And constant as the motion of the day;  
Stern self-denial round him spread, with  
shade

That might be deemed forbidding, did not  
there

All generous feelings flourish and rejoice;  
Forbearance, charity in deed and thought,  
And resolution competent to take  
Out of the bosom of simplicity

All that her holy customs recommend,  
And the best ages of the world prescribe.

—Preaching, administering, in every work  
Of his sublime vocation, in the walks  
Of worldly intercourse between man and  
man,

And in his humble dwelling, he appears  
A labourer, with moral virtue girt,  
With spiritual graces, like a glory, crowned."

"Doubt can be none," the Pastor said,  
"for whom

This portraiture is sketched. The great,  
the good,

The well-beloved, the fortunate, the wise,—  
These titles emperors and chiefs have borne,  
Honour assumed or given: and him, the

WONDERFUL,

Our simple shepherds, speaking from the heart,  
 Deservedly have styled.—From his abode  
 In a dependent chapelry that lies  
 Behind yon hill, a poor and rugged wild,  
 Which in his soul he lovingly embraced,  
 And, having once espoused, would never quit;  
 Into its graveyard will ere long be borne  
 That lowly, great, good Man. A simple stone  
 May cover him; and by its help, perchance,  
 A century shall hear his name pronounced,  
 With images attendant on the sound;  
 Then, shall the slowly-gathering twilight close  
 In utter night; and of his course remain  
 No cognizable vestiges, no more  
 Than of this breath, which shapes itself in words  
 To speak of him, and instantly dissolves."

The Pastor, pressed by thoughts which round his theme  
 Still lingered, after a brief pause, resumed;  
 "Noise is there not enough in doleful war,  
 But that the heaven-born poet must stand forth,  
 And lend the echoes of his sacred shell,  
 To multiply and aggravate the din?  
 Pangs are there not enough in hopeless love—  
 And, in requited passion, all too much  
 Of turbulence, anxiety, and fear—  
 But that the minstrel of the rural shade  
 Must tune his pipe, insidiously to nurse  
 The perturbation in the suffering breast,  
 And propagate its kind, far as he may?  
 —Ah who (and with such rapture as befits  
 The hallowed theme) will rise and celebrate  
 The good man's purposes and deeds; retrace  
 His struggles, his discomfitures deplore,  
 His triumphs hail, and glorify his end;  
 That virtue, like the fumes and vapoury clouds  
 Through fancy's heat redounding in the brain,  
 And like the soft infections of the heart,  
 By charm of measured words may spread  
 O'er field,  
 Hamlet, and town; and piety survive  
 Upon the lips of men in hall or bower;  
 Not for reproof, but high and warm delight,

And grave encouragement, by song inspired?  
 —Vain thought! but wherefore murmur or repine?

The memory of the just survives in heaven:  
 And, without sorrow, will the ground receive  
 That venerable clay. Meanwhile the best  
 Of what lies here confines us to degrees  
 In excellence less difficult to reach,  
 And milder worth: nor need we travel far  
 From those to whom our last regards were paid,

For such example.

Almost at the root  
 Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose bare  
 And slender stem, while here I sit at eve,  
 Oft stretches towards me, like a long straight path

Traced faintly in the greensward; there,  
 beneath

A plain blue stone, a gentle Dalesman lies,  
 From whom, in early childhood, was withdrawn

The precious gift of hearing. He grew up  
 From year to year in loneliness of soul;  
 And this deep mountain-valley was to him  
 Soundless, with all its streams. The bird  
 of dawn

Did never rouse this Cottager from sleep  
 With startling summons; not for his delight  
 The vernal cuckoo shouted; not for him  
 Murmured the labouring bee. When stormy  
 winds

Were working the broad bosom of the lake  
 Into a thousand thousand sparkling waves,  
 Rocking the trees, or driving cloud on cloud  
 Along the sharp edge of yon lofty crags,  
 The agitated scene before his eye  
 Was silent as a picture: evermore  
 Were all things silent, wheresoe'er he moved.  
 Yet, by the solace of his own pure thoughts  
 Upheld, he duteously pursued the round  
 Of rural labours; the steep mountain-side  
 Ascended, with his staff and faithful dog;  
 The plough he guided, and the scythe he  
 swayed;

And the ripe corn before his sickle fell  
 Among the jocund reapers. For himself,  
 All watchful and industrious as he was,  
 He wrought not: neither field nor flock he  
 owned:

No wish for wealth had place within his  
 mind;  
 Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or  
 care.

Though born a younger brother, need  
 was none  
 That from the floor of his paternal home  
 He should depart, to plant himself anew.  
 And when, mature in manhood, he beheld  
 His parents laid in earth, no loss ensued  
 Of rights to him; but he remained well  
 pleased,  
 By the pure bond of independent love,  
 An inmate of a second family;  
 The fellow-labourer and friend of him  
 To whom the small inheritance had fallen.  
 —Nor deem that his mild presence was a  
 weight  
 That pressed upon his brother's house; for  
 books  
 Were ready comrades whom he could not  
 tire;  
 Of whose society the blameless Man  
 Was never satiate. Their familiar voice,  
 Even to old age, with unabated charm  
 Beguiled his leisure hours; refreshed his  
 thoughts;  
 Beyond its natural elevation raised  
 His introverted spirit; and bestowed  
 Upon his life an outward dignity  
 Which all acknowledged. The dark winter  
 night,  
 The stormy day, each had its own resource;  
 Song of the muses, sage historic tale,  
 Science severe, or word of holy Writ  
 Announcing immortality and joy  
 To the assembled spirits of just men  
 Made perfect, and from injury secure.  
 —Thus soothed at home, thus busy in the  
 field,  
 To no perverse suspicion he gave way,  
 No languor, peevishness, nor vain com-  
 plaint:  
 And they, who were about him, did not fail  
 In reverence, or in courtesy; they prized  
 His gentle manners: and his peaceful  
 smiles,  
 The gleams of his slow-varying counte-  
 nance,  
 Were met with answering sympathy and love.

At length, when sixty years and five were  
 told,  
 A slow disease insensibly consumed  
 The powers of nature: and a few short  
 steps  
 Of friends and kindred bore him from his  
 home

(Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags)  
 To the profounder stillness of the grave.  
 —Nor was his funeral denied the grace  
 Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful  
 grief;  
 Heart-sorrow rendered sweet by gratitude.  
 And now that monumental stone preserves  
 His name, and unambitiously relates  
 How long, and by what kindly outward  
 aids,  
 And in what pure contentedness of mind,  
 The sad privation was by him endured.  
 —And yon tall pine-tree, whose composing  
 sound  
 Was wasted on the good Man's living ear,  
 Hath now its own peculiar sanctity;  
 And, at the touch of every wandering  
 breeze,  
 Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.

Soul-cheering Light, most bountiful of  
 things!  
 Guide of our way, mysterious comforter!  
 Whose sacred influence, spread through  
 earth and heaven,  
 We all too thanklessly participate,  
 Thy gifts were utterly withheld from him  
 Whose place of rest is near yon ivied porch.  
 Yet, of the wild brooks ask if he com-  
 plained;  
 Ask of the channelled rivers if they held  
 A safer, easier, more determined, course.  
 What terror doth it strike into the mind  
 To think of one, blind and alone, advancing  
 Straight toward some precipice's airy brink!  
 But, timely warned, *He* would have stayed  
 his steps,  
 Protected, say enlightened, by his ear;  
 And on the very edge of vacancy  
 Not more endangered than a man whose  
 eye  
 Beholds the gulf beneath. —No floweret  
 blooms  
 Throughout the lofty range of these rough  
 hills,  
 Nor in the woods, that could from him  
 conceal  
 Its birth-place; none whose figure did not  
 live  
 Upon his touch. The bowels of the earth  
 Enriched with knowledge his industrious  
 mind;  
 The ocean paid him tribute from the stores  
 Lodged in her bosom; and, by science led,

His genius mounted to the plains of heaven.  
—Methinks I see him—how his eye-balls  
rolled,

Beneath his ample brow, in darkness  
paired,—

But each instinct with spirit ; and the frame  
Of the whole countenance alive with  
thought,

Fancy, and understanding ; while the voice  
Discoursed of natural or moral truth  
With eloquence, and such authentic power,  
That, in his presence, humbler knowledge  
stood

Abashed, and tender pity overawed."

"A noble—and, to unreflecting minds,  
A marvellous spectacle," the Wanderer  
said,

"Beings like these present ! But proof  
abounds

Upon the earth that faculties, which seem  
Extinguished, do not, *therefore*, cease to be.  
And to the mind among her powers of sense  
This transfer is permitted,—not alone  
That the bereft their recompense may win ;  
But for remoter purposes of love  
And charity ; nor last nor least for this,  
That to the imagination may be given  
A type and shadow of an awful truth ;  
How, likewise, under sufferance divine,  
Darkness is banished from the realms of  
death,

By man's imperishable spirit, quelled.  
Unto the men who see not as we see  
Futurity was thought, in ancient times,  
To be laid open, and they prophesied.  
And know we not that from the blind have  
flowed

The highest, holiest, raptures of the lyre ;  
And wisdom married to immortal verse ?"

Among the humbler Worthies, at our feet  
Lying insensible to human praise,  
Love, or regret,—*whose* lineaments would  
next

Have been portrayed, I guess not ; but it  
chanced

That, near the quiet churchyard where we  
sate,

A team of horses, with a ponderous freight  
Pressing behind, adown a rugged slope,  
Whose sharp descent confounded their  
array,

Came at that moment, ringing noisily.

"Here," said the Pastor, "do we muse,  
and mourn

The waste of death ; and lo ! the giant oak  
Stretched on his bier—that massy timber  
wain ;

Nor fail to note the Man who guides the  
team."

He was a peasant of the lowest class :  
Grey locks profusely round his temples hung  
In clustering curls, like ivy, which the bite  
Of winter cannot thin ; the fresh air lodged  
Within his cheek, as light within a cloud ;  
And he returned our greeting with a smile.  
When he had passed, the Solitary spake ;  
"A Man he seems of cheerful yesterdays  
And confident to-morrows ; with a face  
Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much  
Of Nature's impress,—gaiety and health,  
Freedom and hope ; but keen, withal, and  
shrewd.

His gestures note,—and hark ! his tones of  
voice

Are all vivacious as his mien and looks."

The Pastor answered : "You have read  
him well.

Year after year is added to his store  
With *silent* increase : summers, winters—  
past,

Past or to come ; yea, boldly might I say,  
Ten summers and ten winters of a space  
That lies beyond life's ordinary bounds,  
Upon his sprightly vigour cannot fix  
The obligation of an anxious mind,  
A pride in having, or a fear to lose ;  
Possessed like outskirts of some large  
domain,

By any one more thought of than by him  
Who holds the land in fee, its careless  
lord !

Yet is the creature rational, endowed  
With foresight ; hears, too, every sabbath  
day,

The christian promise with attentive ear ;  
Nor will, I trust, the Majesty of Heaven  
Reject the incense offered up by him,  
Though of the kind which beasts and birds  
present

In grove or pasture ; cheerfulness of soul,  
From trepidation and repining free.

How many scrupulous worshippers fall down  
Upon their knees, and daily homage pay  
Less worthy, less religious even, than his !

This qualified respect, the old Man's due,  
Is paid without reluctance; but in truth,"  
(Said the good Vicar with a fond half-smile)

"I feel at times a motion of despite  
Towards one, whose bold contrivances and  
skill,

As you have seen, bear such conspicuous  
part

In works of havoc; taking from these vales,  
One after one, their proudest ornaments.  
Full oft his doings leave me to deplore  
Tall ash-tree, sown by winds, by vapours  
nursed,

In the dry crannies of the pendent rocks;  
Light birch, aloft upon the horizon's edge,  
A veil of glory for the ascending moon;  
And oak whose roots by noontide dew were  
damped,

And on whose forehead inaccessible  
The raven lodged in safety.—Many a ship  
Launched into Morecamb-bay to *him* hath  
owed

Her strong knee-timbers, and the mast that  
bears

The loftiest of her pendants; He, from park  
Or forest, fetched the enormous axle-tree  
That whirls (how slow itself!) ten thousand  
spindles:

And the vast engine labouring in the mine,  
Content with meaner prowess, must have  
lacked

The trunk and body of its marvellous  
strength,

If his undaunted enterprise had failed  
Among the mountain coves.

Yon household fir,  
A guardian planted to fence off the blast,  
But towering high the roof above, as if  
Its humble destination were forgot—  
That sycamore, which annually holds<sup>1</sup>  
Within its shade, as in a stately tent  
On all sides open to the fanning breeze,  
A grave assemblage, seated while they shear  
The fleece-encumbered flock—the JOYFUL  
ELM,

Around whose trunk the maidens dance in  
May—

And the LORD'S OAK—would plead their  
several rights

In vain, if he were master of their fate;  
His sentence to the axe would doom them  
all.

But, green in age and lusty as he is,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

And promising to keep his hold on earth  
Less, as might seem, in rivalry with men  
Than with the forest's more enduring  
growth,

His own appointed hour will come at last;  
And, like the haughty Spoilers of the world,  
This keen Destroyer, in his turn, must fall.

Now from the living pass we once again:  
From Age," the Priest continued, "turn  
your thoughts;

From Age, that often unlamented drops,  
And mark that daisied hillock, three spans  
long!

—Seven lusty Sons sate daily round the  
board

Of Gold-rill side; and, when the hope had  
ceased

Of other progeny, a Daughter then  
Was given, the crowning bounty of the  
whole;

And so acknowledged with a tremulous joy  
Felt to the centre of that heavenly calm  
With which by nature every mother's soul  
Is stricken in the moment when her throes  
Are ended, and her ears have heard the cry  
Which tells her that a living child is born;  
And she lies conscious, in a blissful rest,  
That the dread storm is weathered by them  
both.

The Father—him at this unlooked-for  
gift

A bolder transport seizes. From the side  
Of his bright hearth, and from his open  
door,

Day after day the gladness is diffused  
To all that come, almost to all that pass;  
Invited, summoned, to partake the cheer  
Spread on the never-empty board, and drink  
Health and good wishes to his new-born  
girl.

From cups replenished by his joyous hand.  
—Those seven fair brothers variously were  
moved

Each by the thoughts best suited to his  
years:

But most of all and with most thankful  
mind

The hoary grandsire felt himself enriched;  
A happiness that ebb'd not, but remained  
To fill the total measure of his soul!

—From the low tenement, his own abode,  
Whither, as to a little private cell,

He had withdrawn from bustle, care, and noise,  
 To spend the sabbath of old age in peace,  
 Once every day he duteously repaired  
 To rock the cradle of the slumbering babe:  
 For in that female infant's name he heard  
 The silent name of his departed wife;  
 Heart-stirring music! hourly heard that name;  
 Full blest he was, 'Another Margaret Green,'  
 Oft did he say, 'was come to Gold-rill side.'

Oh! pang unthought of, as the precious boon  
 Itself had been unlooked-for; oh! dire stroke  
 Of desolating anguish for them all!  
 —Just as the Child could totter on the floor,  
 And, by some friendly finger's help up-stayed,  
 Range round the garden walk, while she perchance  
 Was catching at some novelty of spring,  
 Ground-flower, or glossy insect from its cell  
 Drawn by the sunshine—at that hopeful season  
 The winds of March, smiting insidiously,  
 Raised in the tender passage of the throat  
 Viewless obstruction; whence, all unforewarned,  
 The household lost their pride and soul's delight.  
 —But time hath power to soften all regrets,  
 And prayer and thought can bring to worst distress  
 Due resignation. Therefore, though some tears  
 Fail not to spring from either Parent's eye  
 Oft as they hear of sorrow like their own,  
 Yet this departed Little-one, too long  
 The innocent troubler of their quiet, sleeps  
 In what may now be called a peaceful bed.

On a bright day—so calm and bright, it seemed  
 To us, with our sad spirits, heavenly-fair—  
 These mountains echoed to an unknown sound;  
 A volley, thrice repeated o'er the Corse  
 Let down into the hollow of that grave,  
 Whose shelving sides are red with naked mould.  
 Ye rains of April, duly wet this earth!

Spare, burning sun of midsummer, these sods,  
 That they may knit together, and therewith  
 Our thoughts unite in kindred quietness!  
 Nor so the Valley shall forget her loss.  
 Dear Youth, by young and old alike beloved,  
 To me as precious as my own!—Green herbs  
 May creep (I wish that they would softly creep)  
 Over thy last abode, and we may pass  
 Reminded less imperiously of thee;—  
 The ridge itself may sink into the breast  
 Of earth, the great abyss, and be no more;  
 Yet shall not thy remembrance leave our hearts,  
 Thy image disappear!

The Mountain-ash  
 No eye can overlook, when 'mid a grove  
 Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head  
 Decked with autumnal berries, that outshine  
 Spring's richest blossoms; and ye may have marked,  
 By a brook-side or solitary tarn,  
 How she her station doth adorn: the pool  
 Glows at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks  
 Are brightened round her. In his native vale  
 Such and so glorious did this Youth appear;  
 A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts  
 By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam  
 Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,  
 By all the graces with which nature's hand  
 Had lavishly arrayed him. As old bards  
 Tell in their idle songs of wandering gods,  
 Pan or Apollo, veiled in human form:  
 Yet, like the sweet-breathed violet of the shade  
 Discovered in their own despite to sense  
 Of mortals (if such fables without blame  
 May find chance-mention on this sacred ground)  
 So, through a simple rustic garb's disguise,  
 And through the impediment of rural cares,  
 In him revealed a scholar's genius shone;  
 And so, not wholly hidden from men's sight,  
 In him the spirit of a hero walked  
 Our unpretending valley.—How the quoit  
 Whizzed from the Stripling's arm! If touched by him,  
 The inglorious foot-ball mounted to the pitch



Of the lark's flight,—or shaped a rainbow  
curve,

Aloft, in prospect of the shouting field !  
The indefatigable fox had learned  
To dread his perseverance in the chase.  
With admiration would he lift his eyes  
To the wide-ruling eagle, and his hand  
Was loth to assault the majesty he loved :  
Else had the strongest fastnesses proved  
weak

To guard the royal brood. The sailing  
glead, :

The wheeling swallow, and the darting  
snipe ;

The sportive sea-gull dancing with the  
waves,

And cautious water-fowl, from distant  
climes,

Fixed at their seat, the centre of the Mere ;  
Were subject to young Oswald's steady aim,  
And lived by his forbearance.

From the coast  
Of France a boastful Tyrant hurled his  
threats ;

Our Country marked the preparation vast  
Of hostile forces ; and she called—with  
voice

That filled her plains, that reached her  
utmost shores,

And in remotest vales was heard—to arms !  
—Then, for the first time, here you might  
have seen

The shepherd's grey to martial scarlet  
changed,

That flashed uncouthly through the woods  
and fields.

Ten hardy Striplings, all in bright attire,  
And graced with shining weapons, weekly  
marched,

From this lone valley, to a central spot  
Where, in assemblage with the flower and  
choice

Of the surrounding district, they might  
learn

The rudiments of war ; ten—hardy, strong,  
And valiant ; but young Oswald, like a  
chief

And yet a modest comrade, led them forth  
From their shy solitude, to face the world,  
With a gay confidence and seemly pride ;  
Measuring the soil beneath their happy feet  
Like Youths released from labour, and yet  
bound

To most laborious service, though to them

A festival of unencumbered ease ;  
The inner spirit keeping holiday,  
Like vernal ground to sabbath sunshine left.

Of have I marked him, at some leisure  
hour,

Stretched on the grass, or seated in the  
shade,

Among his fellows, while an ample map  
Before their eyes lay carefully outspread,  
From which the gallant teacher would dis-  
course,

Now pointing this way, and now that.—  
' Here flows,'

Thus would he say, ' the Rhine, that  
famous stream !

' Eastward, the Danube toward this inland  
sea,

' A mightier river, winds from realm to  
realm ;

' And, like a serpent, shows his glittering  
back

' Bspotted—with innumerable isles :  
' Here reigns the Russian, there the Turk ;  
observe

' His capital city !' Thence, along a tract  
Of livelier interest to his hopes and fears,  
His finger moved, distinguishing the spots  
Where wide-spread conflict then most  
fiercely raged ;

Nor left unstigmatized those fatal fields  
On which the sons of mighty Germany  
Were taught a base submission.—' Here  
behold

' A nobler race, the Switzers, and their land,  
' Vales deeper far than these of ours, huge  
woods,

' And mountains white with everlasting  
snow !'

—And, surely, he, that spake with kindling  
brow, '

Was a true patriot, hopeful as the best  
Of that young peasantry, who, in our days,  
Have fought and perished for Helvetia's  
rights—

Ah, not in vain !—or those who, in old  
time,

For work of happier issue, to the side  
Of Tell came trooping from a thousand huts,  
When he had risen alone ! No braver  
Youth

Descended from Judean heights, to march  
With righteous Joshua ; nor appeared in  
arms

When grove was felled, and altar was cast  
down,  
And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-in-  
flamed,  
And strong in hatred of idolatry."

The Pastor, even as if by these last words  
Raised from his seat within the chosen  
shade,  
Moved toward the grave;—instinctively his  
steps

We followed; and my voice with joy ex-  
claimed:

"Power to the Oppressors of the world is  
given,

A might of which they dream not. Oh!  
the curse,

To be the awakener of divinest thoughts,  
Father and founder of exalted deeds;

And, to whole nations bound in servile  
straits,

The liberal donor of capacities

More than heroic! this to be, nor yet  
Have sense of one connatural wish, nor  
yet

Deserve the least return of human thanks;  
Winning no recompense but deadly hate  
With pity mixed, astonishment with scorn!"

When this involuntary strain had ceased,  
The Pastor said: "So Providence is served;  
The forked weapon of the skies can send  
Illumination into deep, dark holds,  
Which the mild sunbeam hath not power  
to pierce.

Ye Thrones that have defied remorse, and  
cast

Pity away, soon shall ye quake with *fear*!  
For, not unconscious of the mighty debt  
Which to outrageous wrong the sufferer  
owes,

Europe, through all her habitable bounds,  
Is thirsting for *their* overthrow, who yet  
Survive, as pagan temples stood of yore,  
By horror of their impious rites, preserved;  
Are still permitted to extend their pride,  
Like cedars on the top of Lebanon  
Darkening the sun.

But less impatient thoughts,  
And love 'all hoping and expecting all,'  
This hallowed grave demands, where rests  
in peace

A humble champion of the better cause,  
A Peasant-youth, so call him, for he asked

No higher name; in whom our country  
showed,

As in a favourite son, most beautiful.  
In spite of vice, and misery, and disease,  
Spread with the spreading of her wealthy  
arts,

England, the ancient and the free, appeared  
In him to stand before my swimming eyes,  
Unconquerably virtuous and secure.

—No more of this, lest I offend his dust:  
Short was his life, and a brief tale remains.

One day—a summer's day of annual  
pomp

And solemn chase—from morn to sultry  
noon

His steps had followed, fleetest of the fleet,  
The red-deer driven along its native heights  
With cry of hound and horn; and, from  
that toil

Returned with sinews weakened and re-  
laxed,

This generous Youth, too negligent of self,  
Plunged—'mid a gay and busy throng con-  
vened

To wash the fleeces of his Father's flock—  
Into the chilling flood. Convulsions dire  
Seized him, that self-same night; and  
through the space

Of twelve ensuing days his frame was  
wrenched,

Till nature rested from her work in death.  
To him, thus snatched away, his comrades  
paid

A soldier's honours. At his funeral hour  
Bright was the sun, the sky a cloudless  
blue—

A golden lustre slept upon the hills;  
And if by chance a stranger, wandering  
there,

From some commanding eminence had  
looked

Down on this spot, well pleased would he  
have seen

A glittering spectacle; but every face  
Was pallid: seldom hath that eye been  
moist

With tears, that wept not then; nor were  
the few,

Who from their dwellings came not forth  
to join

In this sad service, less disturbed than we.  
They started at the tributary peal  
Of instantaneous thunder, which announced,

Through the still air, the closing of the  
Grave;  
And distant mountains echoed with a sound  
Of lamentation, never heard before !”

The Pastor ceased. — My venerable Friend  
Victoriously upraised his clear bright eye;  
And, when that eulogy was ended, stood  
Enrapt, as if his inward sense perceived  
The prolongation of some still response,  
Sent by the ancient Soul of this wide land,  
The Spirit of its mountains and its seas,  
Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power,  
Its rights and virtues—by that Deity  
Descending, and supporting his pure heart  
With patriotic confidence and joy.  
And, at the last of those memorial words,  
The pining Solitary turned aside;  
Whether through manly instinct to conceal  
Tender emotions spreading from the heart  
To his worn cheek; or with uneasy shame  
For those cold humours of habitual spleen  
That, fondly seeking in dispraise of man  
Solace and self-excuse, had sometimes  
urged

To self-abuse a not ineloquent tongue.  
—Right toward the sacred Edifice his steps  
Had been directed; and we saw him now  
Intent upon a monumental stone,  
Whose uncouth form was grafted on the  
wall,  
Or rather seemed to have grown into the  
side  
Of the rude pile; as oft-times trunks of  
trees,  
Where nature works in wild and craggy  
spots,  
Are seen incorporate with the living rock—  
To endure for aye. The Vicar, taking note  
Of his employment, with a courteous smile  
Exclaimed—

“The sagest Antiquarian’s eye  
That task would foil;” then, letting fall his  
voice  
While he advanced, thus spake: “Tradition tells  
That, in Eliza’s golden days, a Knight  
Came on a war-horse sumptuously attired,  
And fixed his home in this sequestered vale.  
’Tis left untold if here he first drew breath,  
Or as a stranger reached this deep recess,  
Unknowing and unknown. A pleasing  
thought  
I sometimes entertain, that haply bound

To Scotland’s court in service of his Queen,  
Or sent on mission to some northern Chief  
Of England’s realm, this vale he might  
have seen

With transient observation; and thence  
caught

An image fair, which, brightening in his  
soul

When joy of war and pride of chivalry  
Languished beneath accumulated years,  
Had power to draw him from the world,  
resolved

To make that paradise his chosen home  
To which his peaceful fancy oft had turned.

Vague thoughts are these; but, if belief  
may rest

Upon unwritten story fondly traced  
From sire to son, in this obscure retreat  
The Knight arrived, with spear and shield,  
and borne

Upon a Charger gorgeously bedecked  
With brodered housings. And the lofty  
Steed—

His sole companion, and his faithful friend,  
Whom he, in gratitude, let loose to range  
In fertile pastures—was beheld with eyes  
Of admiration and delightful awe,  
By those untravell’d Dalesmen. With less  
pride,

Yet free from touch of envious discontent,  
They saw a mansion at his bidding rise,  
Like a bright star, amid the lowly band  
Of their rude homesteads. Here the  
Warrior dwelt;

And, in that mansion, children of his own,  
Or kindred, gathered round him. As a  
tree

That falls and disappears, the house is  
gone;

And, through improvidence or want of love  
For ancient worth and honourable things,  
The spear and shield are vanished, which  
the Knight

Hung in his rustic hall. One ivied arch  
Myself have seen, a gateway, last remains  
Of that foundation in domestic care  
Raised by his hands. And now no trace  
is left

Of the mild-hearted Champion, save this  
stone,

Faithless memorial! and his family name  
Borne by yon clustering cottages, that  
sprang

From out the ruins of his stately lodge :  
These, and the name and title at full  
length,—

Sir Alfred Arthing, with appropriate  
words

Accompanied, still extant, in a wreath  
Or posy, girding round the several fronts  
Of three clear-sounding and harmonious  
bells,

That in the steeple hang, his pious gift."

"So fails, so languishes, grows dim, and  
dies,"

The grey-haired Wanderer pensively ex-  
claimed,

"All that this world is proud of. From  
their spheres

The stars of human glory are cast down ;  
Perish the roses and the flowers of kings,<sup>1</sup>  
Princes, and emperors, and the crowns and  
palms

Of all the mighty, withered and consumed !  
Nor is power given to lowliest innocence  
Long to protect her own. The man him-  
self

Departs ; and soon is spent the line of those  
Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,  
In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,  
Did most resemble him. Degrees and  
ranks,

Fraternities and orders—heaping high  
New wealth upon the burthen of the old,  
And placing trust in privilege confirmed  
And re-confirmed—are scoffed at with a  
smile

Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand  
Of Desolation, aimed : to slow decline  
These yield, and these to sudden over-  
throw :

Their virtue, service, happiness, and state  
Expire ; and nature's pleasant robe of  
green,

Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps  
Their monuments and their memory. The  
vast Frame

Of social nature changes evermore  
Her organs and her members, with decay  
Restless, and restless generation, powers  
And functions dying and produced at  
need,—

And by this law the mighty whole sub-  
sists :

With an ascent and progress in the main ;

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Yet, oh ! how disproportioned to the hopes  
And expectations of self-flattering minds !

The courteous Knight, whose bones are  
here interred,

Lived in an age conspicuous as our own  
For strife and ferment in the minds of  
men ;

Whence alteration in the forms of things,  
Various and vast. A memorable age !  
Which did to him assign a pensive lot—  
To linger 'mid the last of those bright  
clouds

That, on the steady breeze of honour,  
sailed

In long procession calm and beautiful.  
He who had seen his own bright order  
fade,

And its devotion gradually decline,  
(While war, relinquishing the lance and  
shield,

Her temper changed, and bowed to other  
laws)

Had also witnessed, in his morn of life,  
That violent commotion, which o'erthrew,  
In town and city and sequestered glen,  
Altar, and cross, and church of solemn  
roof,

And old religious house—pile after pile ;  
And shook their tenants out into the fields,  
Like wild beasts without home ! Their hour  
was come ;

But why no softening thought of gratitude,  
No just remembrance, scruple, or wise  
doubt ?

Benevolence is mild ; nor borrows help,  
Save at worst need, from bold impetuous  
force,

Fittest allied to anger and revenge.  
But Human-kind rejoices in the might  
Of mutability ; and airy hopes,  
Dancing around her, hinder and disturb  
Those meditations of the soul that feed  
The retrospective virtues. Festive songs  
Break from the maddened nations at the  
sight

Of sudden overthrow ; and cold neglect  
Is the sure consequence of slow decay.

Even," said the Wanderer, "as that  
courteous Knight,

Bound by his vow to labour for redress  
Of all who suffer wrong, and to enact  
By sword and lance the law of gentleness,

(If I may venture of myself to speak,  
Trusting that not incongruously I blend  
Low things with lofty) I too shall be  
doomed  
To outlive the kindly use and fair esteem  
Of the poor calling which my youth  
embraced  
With no unworthy prospect. But enough;  
—Thoughts crowd upon me—and 'twere  
seemlier now  
To stop, and yield our gracious Teacher  
thanks  
For the pathetic records which his voice  
Hath here delivered; words of heartfelt  
truth,  
Tending to patience when affliction strikes;  
To hope and love; to confident repose  
In God; and reverence for the dust of  
Man."

## BOOK EIGHTH

## THE PARSONAGE

## ARGUMENT

Pastor's apology and apprehensions that he might have detained his Auditors too long, with the Pastor's invitation to his house—Solitary disinclined to comply—Rallies the Wanderer—And playfully draws a comparison between his itinerant profession and that of the Knight-errant—Which leads to Wanderer's giving an account of changes in the Country from the manufacturing spirit—Favourable effects—The other side of the picture, and chiefly as it has affected the humbler classes—Wanderer asserts the hollowness of all national grandeur if unsupported by moral worth—Physical science unable to support itself—Lamentations over an excess of manufacturing industry among the humbler Classes of Society—Picture of a Child employed in a Cotton-mill—Ignorance and degradation of Children among the agricultural Population reviewed—Conversation broken off by a renewed Invitation from the Pastor—Path leading to his House—Its appearance described—His Daughter—His Wife—His Son (a Boy) enters with his Companion—Their happy appearance—The Wanderer how affected by the sight of them.

THE pensive Sceptic of the lonely vale  
To those acknowledgments subscribed his  
own,  
With a sedate compliance, which the  
Priest

Failed not to notice, inly pleased, and  
said :—

"If ye, by whom invited I began  
These narratives of calm and humble life,  
Be satisfied, 'tis well,—the end is gained;  
And, in return for sympathy bestowed  
And patient listening, thanks accept from  
me.

—Life, death, eternity! momentous themes  
Are they—and might demand a seraph's  
tongue,

Were they not equal to their own support;  
And therefore no incompetence of mine  
Could do them wrong. The universal  
forms

Of human nature, in a spot like this,  
Present themselves at once to all men's  
view:

Ye wished for act and circumstance, that  
make

The individual known and understood;  
And such as my best judgment could  
select

From what the place afforded, have been  
given;

Though apprehensions crossed me that my  
zeal

To his might well be likened, who unlocks  
A cabinet stored with gems and pictures—  
draws

His treasures forth, soliciting regard  
To this, and this, as worthier than the  
last,

Till the spectator, who awhile was pleased  
More than the exhibitor himself, becomes  
Weary and faint, and longs to be released.  
—But let us hence! my dwelling is in  
sight,

And there—"

At this the Solitary shrunk  
With backward will; but, wanting not  
address

That inward motion to disguise, he said  
To his Compatriot, smiling as he spake;  
—"The peaceable remains of this good  
Knight

Would be disturbed, I fear, with wrathful  
scorn,

If consciousness could reach him where he  
lies

That one, albeit of these degenerate times,  
Deploping changes past, or dreading change  
Foreseen, had dared to couple, even in  
thought,

The fine vocation of the sword and lance  
 With the gross aims and body-bending  
 toil  
 Of a poor brotherhood who walk the  
 earth  
 Pitied, and, where they are not known,  
 despised.

Yet, by the good Knight's leave, the two  
 estates  
 Are graced with some resemblance. Errant  
 those,  
 Exiles and wanderers—and the like are  
 these;  
 Who, with their burthen, traverse hill and  
 dale,  
 Carrying relief for nature's simple wants.  
 —What though no higher recompense be  
 sought

Than honest maintenance, by irksome toil  
 Full oft procured, yet may they claim respect,  
 Among the intelligent, for what this course  
 Enables them to be and to perform.  
 Their tardy steps give leisure to observe,  
 While solitude permits the mind to feel;  
 Instructs, and prompts her to supply defects  
 By the division of her inward self  
 For grateful converse: and to these poor  
 men

Nature (I but repeat your favourite boast)  
 Is bountiful—go wheresoe'er they may;  
 Kind nature's various wealth is all their  
 own.

Versed in the characters of men; and bound,  
 By ties of daily interest, to maintain  
 Conciliatory manners and smooth speech;  
 Such have been, and still are in their degree,  
 Examples efficacious to refine  
 Rude intercourse; apt agents to expel,  
 By importation of unlooked-for arts,  
 Barbarian torpor, and blind prejudice;  
 Raising, through just gradation, savage life  
 To rustic, and the rustic to urbane.

—Within their moving magazines is lodged  
 Power that comes forth to quicken and exalt  
 Affections seated in the mother's breast,  
 And in the lover's fancy; and to feed  
 The sober sympathies of long-tried friends.  
 —By these Itinerants, as experienced men,  
 Counsel is given; contention they appease  
 With gentle language; in remotest wilds,  
 Tears wipe away, and pleasant tidings  
 bring;

Could the proud quest of chivalry do more?"

"Happy," rejoined the Wanderer, "they  
 who gain

A panegyric from your generous tongue!  
 But, if to these Wayfarers once pertained  
 Aught of romantic interest, it is gone.  
 Their purer service, in this realm at least,  
 Is past for ever.—An inventive Age  
 Has wrought, if not with speed of magic,  
 yet

To most strange issues. I have lived to  
 mark

A new and unforeseen creation rise  
 From out the labours of a peaceful Land  
 Wielding her potent enginery to frame  
 And to produce, with appetite as keen  
 As that of war, which rests not night or  
 day,

Industrious to destroy! With fruitless  
 pains

Might one like me *now* visit many a tract  
 Which, in his youth, he trod, and trod  
 again,

A lone pedestrian with a scanty freight,  
 Wished-for, or welcome, wheresoe'er he  
 came—

Among the tenantry of thorpe and vill;  
 Or straggling burgh, of ancient charter  
 proud,

And dignified by battlements and towers  
 Of some stern castle, mouldering on the  
 brow

Of a green hill or bank of rugged stream.  
 The foot-path faintly marked, the horse-  
 track wild,

And formidable length of plashy lane,  
 (Prized avenues ere others had been shaped  
 Or easier links connecting place with place)  
 Have vanished—swallowed up by stately  
 roads

Easy and bold, that penetrate the gloom  
 Of Britain's farthest glens. The Earth has  
 lent<sup>1</sup>

Her waters, Air her breezes; and the sail  
 Of traffic glides with ceaseless intercourse,  
 Glistening along the low and woody dale;  
 Or, in its progress, on the lofty side,  
 Of some bare hill, with wonder kenned  
 from far,

Meanwhile, at social Industry's com-  
 mand,  
 How quick, how vast an increase! From  
 the germ

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced  
Here a huge town, continuous and compact,  
Hiding the face of earth for leagues—and  
there,

Where not a habitation stood before,  
Abodes of men irregularly massed  
Like trees in forests,—spread through  
spacious tracts,

O'er which the smoke of unremitting fires  
Hangs permanent, and plentiful as wreaths  
Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.

And, wheresoe'er the traveller turns his  
steps,

He sees the barren wilderness erased,  
Or disappearing; triumph that proclaims  
How much the mild Directress of the plough  
Owes to alliance with these new-born arts!  
—Hence is the wide sea peopled,—hence  
the shores

Of Britain are resorted to by ships  
Freighted from every climate of the world  
With the world's choicest produce. Hence  
that sum

Of keels that rest within her crowded ports,  
Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays;  
That animating spectacle of sails  
That, through her inland regions, to and  
fro

Pass with the respirations of the tide,  
Perpetual, multitudinous! Finally,  
Hence a dread arm of floating power, a voice  
Of thunder daunting those who would ap-  
proach

With hostile purposes the blessed Isle,  
Truth's consecrated residence, the seat  
Impregnable of Liberty and Peace.

And yet, O happy Pastor of a flock  
Faithfully watched, and, by that loving care  
And Heaven's good providence, preserved  
from taint!

With you I grieve, when on the darker side  
Of this great change I look; and there  
behold

Such outrage done to nature as compels  
The indignant power to justify herself;  
Yea, to avenge her violated rights,  
For England's bane.—When soothing dark-  
ness spreads

O'er hill and vale," the Wanderer thus ex-  
pressed

His recollections, "and the punctual stars,  
While all things else are gathering to their  
homes,

Advance, and in the firmament of heaven  
Glitter—but undisturbing, undisturbed;  
As if their silent company were charged  
With peaceful admonitions for the heart  
Of all-beholding Man, earth's thoughtful  
lord;

Then, in full many a region, once like this  
The assured domain of calm simplicity  
And pensive quiet, an unnatural light  
Prepared for never-resting Labour's eyes  
Breaks from a many-windowed fabric huge;  
And at the appointed hour a bell is heard—  
Of harsher import than the curfew-knoll  
That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern  
behest—

A local summons to unceasing toil!  
Disgorged are now the ministers of day;  
And, as they issue from the illumined pile,  
A fresh band meets them, at the crowded  
door—

And in the courts—and where the rumbling  
stream,

That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,  
Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed  
Among the rocks below. Men, maidens,  
youths,

Mother and little children, boys and girls,  
Enter, and each the wonted task resumes  
Within this temple, where is offered up  
To Gain, the master idol of the realm,  
Perpetual sacrifice. Even thus of old  
Our ancestors, within the still domain  
Of vast cathedral or conventual church,  
Their vigils kept; where tapers day and  
might

On the dim altar burned continually,  
In token that the House was evermore  
Watching to God. Religious men were  
they;

Nor would their reason, tutored to aspire  
Above this transitory world, allow  
That there should pass a moment of the  
year,

When in their land the Almighty's service  
ceased.

Triumph who will in these profaner rites  
Which we, a generation self-exalted,  
As zealously perform! I cannot share  
His proud complacency:—yet do I exult,  
Casting reserve away, exult to see  
An intellectual mastery exercised  
O'er the blind elements; a purpose given,  
A perseverance fed; almost a soul

Imparted—to brute matter. I rejoice,  
 Measuring the force of those gigantic  
     powers  
 That, by the thinking mind, have been  
     compelled  
 To serve the will of feeble-bodied Man.  
 For with the sense of admiration blends  
 The animating hope that time may come  
 When, strengthened, yet not dazzled, by  
     the might

Of this dominion over nature gained,  
 Men of all lands shall exercise the same  
 In due proportion to their country's need ;  
 Learning, though late, that all true glory  
     rests,

All praise, all safety, and all happiness,  
 Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes,  
 Tyre, by the margin of the sounding waves,  
 Palmyra, central in the desert, fell ;  
 And the Arts died by which they had been  
     raised.

—Call Archimedes from his buried tomb  
 Upon the grave of vanished Syracuse,  
 And feelingly the Sage shall make report  
 How insecure, how baseless in itself,  
 Is the Philosophy whose sway depends  
 On mere material instruments ;—how weak  
 Those arts, and high inventions, if un-  
     propped

By virtue.—He, sighing with pensive grief,  
 Amid his calm abstractions, would admit  
 That not the slender privilege is theirs  
 To save themselves from blank forgetful-  
     ness !"

When from the Wanderer's lips these  
     words had fallen,  
 I said, "And, did in truth those vaunted  
     Arts

Possess such privilege, how could we escape  
 Sadness and keen regret, we who revere,  
 And would preserve as things above all  
     price,

The old domestic morals of the land,  
 Her simple manners, and the stable worth  
 That dignified and cheered a low estate ?  
 Oh ! where is now the character of peace,  
 Sobriety, and order, and chaste love,  
 And honest dealing, and untainted speech,  
 And pure good-will, and hospitable cheer ;  
 That made the very thought of country-life  
 A thought of refuge, for a mind detained  
 Reluctantly amid the bustling crowd ?  
 Where now the beauty of the sabbath kept ;

With conscientious reverence, as a day  
 By the almighty Lawgiver pronounced  
 Holy and blest ? and where the winning  
     grace

Of all the lighter ornaments attached  
 To time and season, as the year rolled  
     round ?"

"Fled !" was the Wanderer's passionate  
     response,

"Fled utterly ! or only to be traced  
 In a few fortunate retreats like this ;  
 Which I behold with trembling, when I  
     think

What lamentable change, a year—a  
     month—

May bring ; that brook converting as it  
     runs

Into an instrument of deadly bane  
 For those, who, yet untempted to forsake  
 The simple occupations of their sires,  
 Drink the pure water of its innocent stream  
 With lip almost as pure.—Domestic bliss  
 (Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)   
 How art thou blighted for the poor Man's  
     heart !

Lo ! in such neighbourhood, from morn to  
     eve,

The habitations empty ! or perchance  
 The Mother left alone,—no helping hand  
 To rock the cradle of her peevish babe ;  
 No daughters round her, busy at the wheel,  
 Or in dispatch of each day's little growth  
 Of household occupation ; no nice arts  
 Of needle-work ; no bustle at the fire,  
 Where once the dinner was prepared with  
     pride ;

Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the  
     mind ;

Nothing to praise to teach, or to com-  
     mand !

The Father, if perchance he still retain  
 His old employments, goes to field or  
     wood,

No longer led or followed by the Sons ;  
 Idlers perchance they were,—but in *his*  
     sight ;

Breathing fresh air, and treading the green  
     earth :

"Till their short holiday of childhood ceased,  
 Ne'er to return ! That birthright now is  
     lost.

Economists will tell you that the State



Thrives by the forfeiture—unfeeling thought,  
And false as monstrous! Can the mother  
thrive

By the destruction of her innocent sons  
In whom a premature necessity  
Blocks out the forms of nature, precon-  
sumes

The reason, famishes the heart, shuts up  
The infant Being in itself, and makes  
Its very spring a season of decay!  
The lot is wretched, the condition sad,  
Whether a pining discontent survive,  
And thirst for change; or habit hath sub-  
dued

The soul deprest, dejected—even to love  
Of her close tasks, and long captivity.

Oh, banish far such wisdom as condemns  
A native Briton to these inward chains,  
Fixed in his soul, so early and so deep;  
Without his own consent, or knowledge,  
fixed!

He is a slave to whom release comes not,  
And cannot come. The boy, where'er he  
turns,

Is still a prisoner; when the wind is up  
Among the clouds, and roars through the  
ancient woods;

Or when the sun is shining in the east,  
Quiet and calm. Behold him—in the  
school

Of his attainments? no; but with the air  
Fanning his temples under heaven's blue  
arch.

His raiment, whitened o'er with cotton-  
flakes

Or locks of wool, announces whence he  
comes.

Creeping his gait and cowering, his lip pale,  
His respiration quick and audible;  
And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam  
Could break from out those languid eyes,  
or a blush

Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form,  
Is that the countenance, and such the port,  
Of no mean Being? One who should be  
clothed

With dignity befitting his proud hope;  
Who, in his very childhood, should appear  
Sublime from present purity and joy!

The limbs increase; but liberty of mind  
Is gone for ever; and this organic frame,  
So joyful in its motions, is become  
Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead;

And even the touch, so exquisitely poured  
Through the whole body, with a languid  
will

Performs its functions; rarely competent  
To impress a vivid feeling on the mind  
Of what there is delightful in the breeze,  
The gentle visitations of the sun,  
Or lapse of liquid element—by hand,  
Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth—per-  
ceived.

—Can hope look forward to a manhood  
raised

On such foundations?"

"Hope is none for him!"

The pale Recluse indignantly exclaimed,  
"And tens of thousands suffer wrong as  
deep.

Yet be it asked, in justice to our age,  
If there were not, before those arts  
appeared,

These structures rose, commingling old and  
young,

And unripe sex with sex, for mutual taint;  
If there were not, *then*, in our far-famed  
Isle,

Multitudes, who from infancy had breathed  
Air unimprisoned, and had lived at large;  
Yet walked beneath the sun, in human  
shape,

As abject, as degraded? At this day,  
Who shall enumerate the crazy huts  
And tottering hovels, whence do issue forth  
A ragged Offspring, with their upright hair  
Crowned like the image of fantastic Fear;  
Or wearing, (shall we say?) in that white  
growth

An ill-adjusted turban, for defence  
Or fierceness, wreathed around their sun-  
burnt brows,

By savage Nature? Shrivelled are their  
lips,

Naked, and coloured like the soil, the feet  
On which they stand; as if thereby they  
drew

Some nourishment, as trees do by their  
roots,

From earth, the common mother of us all.  
Figure and mien, complexion and attire,  
Are leagued to strike dismay; but out-  
stretched hand

And whining voice denote them supplicants  
For the least boon that pity can bestow.  
Such on the breast of darksome heaths are  
found;

And with their parents occupy the skirts  
Of furze-clad commons; such are born and  
reared

At the mine's mouth under impending  
rocks;

Or dwell in chambers of some natural cave;  
Or where their ancestors erected huts,  
For the convenience of unlawful gain,  
In forest purlieus; and the like are bred,  
All England through, where nooks and  
slips of ground

Purloined, in times less jealous than our  
own,

From the green margin of the public way,  
A residence afford them, 'mid the bloom  
And gaiety of cultivated fields.

Such (we will hope the lowest in the scale)  
Do I remember oft-times to have seen  
'Mid Buxton's dreary heights. In earnest  
watch,

Till the swift vehicle approach, they stand;  
Then, following closely with the cloud of  
dust,

An uncouth feat exhibit, and are gone  
Heels over head, like tumblers on a stage.  
—Up from the ground they snatch the  
copper coin,

And, on the freight of merry passengers  
Fixing a steady eye, maintain their speed;  
And spin—and pant—and overhead again,  
Wild pursuivants! until their breath is lost,  
Or bounty tires—and every face, that smiled  
Encouragement, hath ceased to look that  
way.

—But, like the vagrants of the gipsy tribe,  
These, bred to little pleasure in themselves,  
Are profitless to others.

Turn we then  
To Britons born and bred within the pale  
Of civil polity, and early trained  
To earn, by wholesome labour in the field,  
The bread they eat. A sample should I  
give

Of what this stock hath long produced to  
enrich

'The tender age of life, ye would exclaim,  
'Is this the whistling plough-boy whose  
shrill notes

Impart new gladness to the morning air!  
Forgive me if I venture to suspect  
That many, sweet to hear of in soft verse,  
Are of no finer frame. Stiff are his joints;  
Beneath a cumbrous frock, that to the knees  
Invests the thriving churl, his legs appear,

Fellows to those that lustily upheld  
The wooden stools for everlasting use,  
Whereon our fathers sate. And mark his  
brow

Under whose shaggy canopy are set  
Two eyes—not dim, but of a healthy  
stare—

Wide, sluggish, blank, and ignorant, and  
strange—

Proclaiming boldly that they never drew  
A look or motion of intelligence  
From infant-conning of the Christ-cross-  
row,

Or puzzling through a primer, line by line,  
Till perfect mastery crown the pains at last.  
—What kindly warmth from touch of  
fostering hand,

What penetrating power of sun or breeze,  
Shall e'er dissolve the crust wherein his soul  
Sleeps, like a caterpillar sheathed in ice?

This torpor is no pitiable work  
Of modern ingenuity; no town  
Nor crowded city can be taxed with aught  
Of sottish vice or desperate breach of law,  
To which (and who can tell where or how  
soon?)

He may be roused. This Boy the fields  
produce:

His spade and hoe, mattock and glittering  
scythe,

The carter's whip that on his shoulder rests  
In air high-towering with a boorish pomp,  
The sceptre of his sway; his country's  
name,

Her equal rights, her churches and her  
schools—

What have they done for him? And, let  
me ask,

For tens of thousands uninformed as he?  
In brief, what liberty of *mind* is here?"

This ardent sally pleased the mild good  
Man,

To whom the appeal couched in its closing  
words

Was pointedly addressed; and to the  
thoughts

That, in assent or opposition, rose  
Within his mind, he seemed prepared to  
give

Prompt utterance; but the Vicar interposed  
With invitation urgently renewed.

—We followed, taking as he led, a path  
Along a hedge of hollies dark and tall,

Whose flexile boughs low bending with a weight  
 Of leafy spray, concealed the stems and roots  
 That gave them nourishment. When frosty winds  
 Howl from the north, what kindly warmth, methought,  
 Is here—how grateful this impervious screen!  
 —Not shaped by simple wearing of the foot  
 On rural business passing to and fro  
 Was the commodious walk: a careful hand  
 Had marked the line, and strewn its surface o'er  
 With pure cerulean gravel, from the heights  
 Fetched by a neighbouring brook.—Across the vale  
 The stately fence accompanied our steps;  
 And thus the pathway, by perennial green  
 Guarded and graced, seemed fashioned to unite,  
 As by a beautiful yet solemn chain,  
 The Pastor's mansion with the house of prayer.

Like image of solemnity, conjoined  
 With feminine allurements soft and fair,  
 The mansion's self displayed;—a reverend pile  
 With bold projections and recesses deep;  
 Shadowy, yet gay and lightsome as it stood  
 Fronting the noontide sun. We paused to admire  
 The pillared porch, elaborately embossed;  
 The low wide windows with their mullions old;  
 The cornice, richly fretted, of grey stone;  
 And that smooth slope from which the dwelling rose,  
 By beds and banks Arcadian of gay flowers  
 And flowering shrubs, protected and adorned:  
 Profusion bright! and every flower assuming  
 A more than natural vividness of hue,  
 From unaffected contrast with the gloom  
 Of sober cypress, and the darker foil  
 Of yew, in which survived some traces, here  
 Not unbecoming, of grotesque device  
 And uncouth fancy. From behind the roof  
 Rose the slim ash and massy sycamore,  
 Blending their diverse foliage with the green  
 Of ivy, flourishing and thick, that clasped  
 The huge round chimneys, harbour of delight

For wren and redbreast,—where they sit and sing  
 Their slender ditties when the trees are bare.  
 Nor must I leave untouched (the picture else  
 Were incomplete) a relique of old times  
 Happily spared, a little Gothic niche  
 Of nicest workmanship; that once had held  
 The sculptured image of some patron-saint,  
 Or of the blessed Virgin, looking down  
 On all who entered those religious doors.

But lo! where from the rocky garden-mount  
 Crowned by its antique summer-house—descends,  
 Light as the silver fawn, a radiant Girl;  
 For she hath recognised her honoured friend,  
 The Wanderer ever welcome! A prompt kiss  
 The gladsome Child bestows at his request;  
 And, up the flowery lawn as we advance,  
 Hangs on the old Man with a happy look,  
 And with a pretty restless hand of love.  
 —We enter—by the Lady of the place  
 Cordially greeted. Graceful was her port:  
 A lofty stature undepressed by time,  
 Whose visitation had not wholly spared  
 The finer lineaments of form and face;  
 To that complexion brought which prudence trusts in  
 And wisdom loves.—But when a stately ship  
 Sails in smooth weather by the placid coast  
 On homeward voyage, what—if wind and wave,  
 And hardship undergone in various climes,  
 Have caused her to abate the virgin pride,  
 And that full trim of inexperienced hope  
 With which she left her haven—not for this,  
 Should the sun strike her, and the impartial breeze  
 Play on her streamers, fails she to assume  
 Brightness and touching beauty of her own,  
 That charm all eyes. So bright, so fair, appeared  
 This goodly Matron, shining in the beams  
 Of unexpected pleasure.—Soon the board  
 Was spread, and we partook a plain repast.

Here, resting in cool shelter, we beguiled  
 The mid-day hours with desultory talk;  
 From trivial themes to general argument

Passing, as accident or fancy led,  
Or courtesy prescribed. While question  
rose

And answer flowed, the fetters of reserve  
Dropping from every mind, the Solitary  
Resumed the manners of his happier days;  
And in the various conversation bore  
A willing, nay, at times, a forward part;  
Yet with the grace of one who in the world  
Had learned the art of pleasing, and had  
now

Occasion given him to display his skill,  
Upon the steadfast vantage-ground of truth.  
He gazed, with admiration unsuppressed,  
Upon the landscape of the sun-bright vale,  
Seen, from the shady room in which we sate,  
In softened perspective; and more than  
once

Praised the consummate harmony serene  
Of gravity and elegance, diffused  
Around the mansion and its whole domain;  
Not, doubtless, without help of female taste  
And female care.—“A blessed lot is yours!”  
The words escaped his lip, with a tender  
sigh

Breathed over them: but suddenly the door  
Flew open, and a pair of lusty Boys  
Appeared, confusion checking their delight.  
—Not brothers they in feature or attire,  
But fond companions, so I guessed, in field,  
And by the river's margin—whence they  
come,

Keen anglers with unusual spoil elated.  
One bears a willow-pannier on his back,  
The boy of plainer garb, whose blush sur-  
vives  
More deeply tinged. Twin might the other  
be

To that fair girl who from the garden-mount  
Bounded:—triumphant entry this for him!  
Between his hands he holds a smooth blue  
stone,

On whose capacious surface see outspread  
Large store of gleaming crimson-spotted  
trouts;  
Ranged side by side, and lessening by  
degrees

Up to the dwarf that tops the pinnacle.  
Upon the board he lays the sky-blue stone  
With its rich freight; their number he pro-  
claims;

Tells from what pool the noblest had been  
dragged;  
And where the very monarch of the brook,

After long struggle, had escaped at last—  
Stealing alternately at them and us  
(As doth his comrade too) a look of pride:  
And, verily, the silent creatures made  
A splendid sight, together thus exposed;  
Dead—but not sullied or deformed by  
death,  
That seemed to pity what he could not  
spare.

But oh, the animation in the mien  
Of those two boys! yea in the very words  
With which the young narrator was in-  
spired,  
When, as our questions led, he told at  
large  
Of that day's prowess! Him might I com-  
pare,

His looks, tones, gestures, eager eloquence,  
To a bold brook that splits for better speed,  
And at the self-same moment, works its  
way

Through many channels, ever and anon  
Parted and re-united: his compeer  
To the still lake, whose stillness is to sight  
As beautiful—as grateful to the mind.  
—But to what object shall the lovely Girl  
Be likened? She whose countenance and  
air

Unite the graceful qualities of both,  
Even as she shares the pride and joy of  
both.

My grey-haired Friend was moved; his  
vivid eye  
Glistened with tenderness; his mind, I  
knew,

Was full; and had, I doubted not, re-  
turned,

Upon this impulse, to the theme—erewhile  
Abruptly broken off. The ruddy boys  
Withdrew, on summons to their well-earned  
meal;

And He—to whom all tongues resigned  
their rights

With willingness, to whom the general ear  
Listened with readier patience than to  
strain

Of music, lute or harp, a long delight  
That ceased not when his voice had ceased  
—as One

Who from truth's central point serenely views  
The compass of his argument—began  
Mildly, and with a clear and steady tone.

## BOOK NINTH

DISCOURSE OF THE WANDERER, AND  
AN EVENING VISIT TO THE LAKE

## ARGUMENT

Wanderer asserts that an active principle pervades the Universe, its noblest seat the human soul—How lively this principle is in Childhood—Hence the delight in old Age of looking back upon Childhood—The dignity, powers, and privileges of Age asserted—These not to be looked for generally but under a just government—Right of a human Creature to be exempt from being considered as a mere Instrument—The condition of multitudes deplored—Former conversation recurred to, and the Wanderer's opinions set in a clearer light—Truth placed within reach of the humblest—Equality—Happy state of the two Boys again adverted to—Earnest wish expressed for a System of National Education established universally by Government—Glorious effects of this foretold—Walk to the Lake—Grand spectacle from the side of a hill—Address of Priest to the Supreme Being—In the course of which he contrasts with ancient Barbarism the present appearance of the scene before him—The change ascribed to Christianity—Apostrophe to his flock, living and dead—Gratitude to the Almighty—Return over the Lake—Parting with the Solitary—Under what circumstances.

"To every Form of being is assigned,"  
Thus calmly spake the venerable Sage,  
"An *active* Principle:—howe'er removed  
From sense and observation, it subsists  
In all things, in all natures; in the stars  
Of azure heaven, the unending clouds,  
In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone  
That paves the brooks, the stationary  
rocks,

The moving waters, and the invisible air.  
Whate'er exists hath properties that spread  
Beyond itself, communicating good,  
A simple blessing, or with evil mixed;  
Spirit that knows no insulated spot,  
No chasm, no solitude; from link to link  
It circulates, the Soul of all the worlds.  
This is the freedom of the universe;  
Unfolded still the more, more visible,  
The more we know; and yet is revered  
least,

And least respected in the human Mind,  
Its most apparent home. The food of  
hope

Is meditated action; robbed of this  
Her sole support, she languishes and dies.  
We perish also; for we live by hope  
And by desire; we see by the glad light  
And breathe the sweet air of futurity;  
And so we live, or else we have no life.  
To-morrow—nay perchance this very hour  
(For every moment hath its own to-mor-  
row!)

Those blooming Boys, whose hearts are  
almost sick

With present triumph, will be sure to find  
A field before them freshened with the dew  
Of other expectations;—in which course  
Their happy year spins round. The youth  
obeys

A like glad impulse; and so moves the  
man

'Mid all his apprehensions, cares, and  
fears,—

Or so he ought to move. Ah! why in age  
Do we revert so fondly to the walks  
Of childhood—but that there the Soul dis-  
cerns

The dear memorial footsteps unimpaired  
Of her own native vigour; thence can hear  
Reverberations; and a choral song,  
Commingle with the incense that as-  
cends,

Undaunted, toward the imperishable  
heavens,

From her own lonely altar?

Do not think  
That good and wise ever will be allowed,  
Though strength decay, to breathe in such  
estate

As shall divide them wholly from the stir  
Of hopeful nature. Rightly is it said  
That Man descends into the VALE of years;  
Yet have I thought that we might also  
speak,

And not presumptuously, I trust, of Age,  
As of a final EMINENCE; though bare  
In aspect and forbidding, yet a point  
On which 'tis not impossible to sit  
In awful sovereignty; a place of power,  
A throne, that may be likened unto his,  
Who, in some placid day of summer, looks  
Down from a mountain-top,—say one of  
those

High peaks, that bound the vale where now  
we are.

Faint, and diminished to the gazing eye,  
Forest and field, and hill and dale appear,

With all the shapes over their surface  
spread :

But, while the gross and visible frame of  
things

Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,  
Yea almost on the Mind herself, and seems  
All unsubstantialized,—how loud the voice  
Of waters, with invigorated peal  
From the full river in the vale below,  
Ascending ! For on that superior height  
Who sits, is disencumbered from the press  
Of near obstructions, and is privileged  
To breathe in solitude, above the host  
Of ever-humming insects, 'mid thin air  
That suits not them. The murmur of the  
leaves

Many and idle, visits not his ear :

This he is freed from, and from thousand  
notes

(Not less unceasing, not less vain than  
these,)

By which the finer passages of sense  
Are occupied ; and the Soul, that would  
incline

To listen, is prevented or deterred.

And may it not be hoped, that, placed  
by age

In like removal, tranquil though severe,  
We are not so removed for utter loss ;  
But for some favour, suited to our need ?  
What more than that the severing should  
confer

Fresh power to commune with the invisible  
world,

And hear the mighty stream of tendency  
Uttering, for elevation of our thought,  
A clear sonorous voice, inaudible  
To the vast multitude ; whose doom it is  
To run the giddy round of vain delight,  
Or fret and labour on the Plain below.

But, if to such sublime ascent the hopes  
Of Man may rise, as to a welcome close  
And termination of his mortal course ;  
Them only can such hope inspire whose  
minds

Have not been starved by absolute neglect ;  
Nor bodies crushed by unremitting toil ;  
To whom kind Nature, therefore, may  
afford

Proof of the sacred love she bears for all ;  
Whose birthright Reason, therefore, may  
ensure.

For me, consulting what I feel within  
In times when most existence with herself  
Is satisfied, I cannot but believe,  
That, far as kindly Nature hath free scope  
And Reason's sway predominates ; even so  
far,

Country, society, and time itself,  
That saps the individual's bodily frame,  
And lays the generations low in dust,  
Do, by the almighty Ruler's grace, partake  
Of one maternal spirit, bringing forth  
And cherishing with ever-constant love,  
That tires not, nor betrays. Our life is  
turned

Out of her course, wherever man is made  
An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool  
Or implement, a passive thing employed  
As a brute mean, without acknowledgment  
Of common right or interest in the end ;  
Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt.  
Say, what can follow for a rational soul  
Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,  
And strength in evil ? Hence an after-call  
For chastisement, and custody, and bonds,  
And oft-times Death, avenger of the past,  
And the sole guardian in whose hands we  
dare

Entrust the future.—Not for these sad  
issues

Was Man created ; but to obey the law  
Of life, and hope, and action. And 'tis  
known

That when we stand upon our native soil,  
Unelbowed by such objects as oppress  
Our active powers, those powers themselves  
become

Strong to subvert our noxious qualities :  
They sweep distemper from the busy day,  
And make the chalice of the big round year  
Run o'er with gladness ; whence the Being  
moves

In beauty through the world ; and all who  
see

Bless him, rejoicing in his neighbourhood."

"Then," said the Solitary, "by what  
force

Of language shall a feeling heart express  
Her sorrow for that multitude in whom  
We look for health from seeds that have  
been sown

In sickness, and for increase in a power  
That works but by extinction ? On them-  
selves

They cannot lean, nor turn to their own hearts

To know what they must do ; their wisdom is  
To look into the eyes of others, thence  
I'o be instructed what they must avoid :  
Or rather, let us say, how least observed,  
How with most quiet and most silent death,  
With the least taint and injury to the air  
The oppressor breathes, their human form  
divine,  
And their immortal soul, may waste away."

The Sage rejoined, "I thank you—you  
have spared  
My voice the utterance of a keen regret,  
A wide compassion which with you I share.  
When, heretofore, I placed before your  
sight

A Little-one, subjected to the arts  
Of modern ingenuity, and made  
The senseless member of a vast machine,  
Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel ;  
Think not, that, pitying him, I could forget  
The rustic Boy, who walks the fields, un-  
taught ;

The slave of ignorance, and oft of want,  
And miserable hunger. Much, too much,  
Of this unhappy lot, in early youth  
We both have witnessed, lot which I myself  
Shared, though in mild and merciful  
degree :

Yet was the mind to hindrances exposed,  
Through which I struggled, not without  
distress

And sometimes injury, like a lamb en-  
thrall'd

'Mid thorns and brambles ; or a bird that  
breaks

Through a strong net, and mounts upon  
the wind,

Though with her plumes impaired. If  
they, whose souls

Should open while they range the richer  
fields

Of merry England, are obstructed less  
By indigence, their ignorance is not less,  
Nor less to be deplored. For who can  
doubt

That tens of thousands at this day exist  
Such as the boy you painted, lineal heirs  
Of those who once were vassals of her soil,  
Following its fortunes like the beasts or trees  
Which it sustained. But no one takes de-  
light

In this oppression ; none are proud of it ;  
It bears no sounding name, nor ever bore ;  
A standing grievance, an indigenous vice  
Of every country under heaven. My  
thoughts

Were turned to evils that are new and  
chosen,

A bondage lurking under shape of good,—  
Arts, in themselves beneficent and kind,  
But all too fondly followed and too far ;—  
To victims, which the merciful can see  
Nor think that they are victims—turned to  
wrongs,

By women, who have children of their own,  
Beheld without compassion, yea with praise!  
I spake of mischief by the wise diffused  
With gladness, thinking that the more it  
spreads

The healthier, the securer, we become ;  
Delusion which a moment may destroy !  
Lastly, I mourned for those whom I had  
seen

Corrupted and cast down, on favoured  
ground,

Where circumstance and nature had com-  
bined

To shelter innocence, and cherish love ;  
Who, but for this intrusion, would have  
lived,

Possessed of health, and strength, and  
peace of mind ;

Thus would have lived, or never have been  
born.

Alas ! what differs more than man from  
man !

And whence that difference ? whence but  
from himself ?

For see the universal Race endowed  
With the same upright form !—The sun is  
fixed,

And the infinite magnificence of heaven  
Fixed, within reach of every human eye ;  
The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears ;  
The vernal field infuses fresh delight  
Into all hearts. Throughout the world of  
sense,

Even as an object is sublime or fair,  
That object is laid open to the view  
Without reserve or veil ; and as a power  
Is salutary, or an influence sweet,  
Are each and all enabled to perceive  
That power, that influence, by impartial  
law.

Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all ;  
 Reason, and, with that reason, smiles and  
 tears ;  
 Imagination, freedom in the will ;  
 Conscience to guide and check ; and death  
 to be  
 Foretasted, immortality conceived  
 By all,—a blissful immortality,  
 To them whose holiness on earth shall make  
 The Spirit capable of heaven, assured.  
 Strange, then, nor less than monstrous,  
 might be deemed  
 The failure, if the Almighty, to this point  
 Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide  
 The excellence of moral qualities  
 From common understanding ; leaving  
 truth  
 And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark ;  
 Hard to be won, and only by a few ;  
 Strange, should He deal herein with nice  
 respects,  
 And frustrate all the rest ! Believe it not :  
 The primal duties shine aloft—like stars ;  
 The charities that soothe, and heal, and  
 bless,  
 Are scattered at the feet of Man—like  
 flowers.  
 The generous inclination, the just rule,  
 Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure  
 thoughts—  
 No mystery is here ! Here is no boon  
 For high—yet not for low ; for proudly  
 graced—  
 Yet not for meek of heart. The smoke  
 ascends  
 To heaven as lightly from the cottage hearth  
 As from the highest palace. He, whose  
 soul  
 Ponders this true equality, may walk  
 The fields of earth with gratitude and hope ;  
 Yet, in that meditation, will he find  
 Motive to sadder grief, as we have found ;  
 Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,  
 And for the injustice grieving, that hath  
 made  
 So wide a difference between man and man.

Then let us rather fix our gladdened  
 thoughts  
 Upon the brighter scene. How blest that  
 pair  
 Of blooming Boys (whom we beheld even  
 now)  
 Blest in their several and their common lot !

A few short hours of each returning day  
 The thriving prisoners of their village school :  
 And thence let loose, to seek their pleasant  
 homes

Or range the grassy lawn in vacancy :  
 To breathe and to be happy, run and shout  
 Idle,—but no delay, no harm, no loss ;  
 For every genial power of heaven and earth.  
 Through all the seasons of the changeful  
 year,

Obsequiously doth take upon herself  
 To labour for them ; bringing each in turn  
 The tribute of enjoyment, knowledge,  
 health,

Beauty, or strength ! Such privilege is  
 theirs,

Granted alike in the outset of their course  
 To both ; and, if that partnership must  
 cease,

I grieve not," to the Pastor here he turned,  
 " Much as I glory in that child of yours,  
 Repine not for his cottage-comrade, whom  
 Belike no higher destiny awaits  
 Than the old hereditary wish fulfilled ;  
 The wish for liberty to live—content  
 With what Heaven grants, and die—in  
 peace of mind,

Within the bosom of his native vale.  
 At least, whatever fate the noon of life  
 Reserves for either, sure it is that both  
 Have been permitted to enjoy the dawn ;  
 Whether regarded as a jocund time,  
 That in itself may terminate, or lead  
 In course of nature to a sober eve.  
 Both have been fairly dealt with ; looking  
 back

They will allow that justice has in them  
 Been shown, alike to body and to mind."

He paused, as if revolving in his soul  
 Some weighty matter ; then, with fervent  
 voice

And an impassioned majesty, exclaimed—

" O for the coming of that glorious time  
 When, prize knowledge as her noblest  
 wealth

And best protection, this imperial Realm,  
 While she exacts allegiance, shall admit  
 An obligation, on her part, to *teach*  
 Them who are born to serve her and obey ;  
 Binding herself by statute<sup>1</sup> to secure  
 For all the children whom her soil maintains

<sup>1</sup> See Note.



The rudiments of letters, and inform  
The mind with moral and religious truth,  
Both understood and practised,—so that  
none,

However destitute, be left to droop  
By timely culture unsustained; or run  
Into a wild disorder; or be forced  
To drudge through a weary life without the  
help

Of intellectual implements and tools;  
A savage horde among the civilised,  
A servile band among the lordly free!  
This sacred right, the lisping babe pro-  
claims

To be inherent in him, by Heaven's will,  
For the protection of his innocence;  
And the rude boy—who, having overpast  
The sinless age, by conscience is enrolled,  
Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,  
And lifts his wilful hand on mischief bent,  
Or turns the godlike faculty of speech  
To impious use—by process indirect  
Declares his due, while he makes known  
his need.

—This sacred right is fruitlessly announced,  
This universal plea in vain addressed,  
To eyes and ears of parents who themselves  
Did, in the time of their necessity,  
Urge it in vain; and, therefore, like a  
prayer

That from the humblest floor ascends to  
heaven,

It mounts to meet the State's parental ear;  
Who, if indeed she own a mother's heart,  
And be not most unfeelingly devoid  
Of gratitude to Providence, will grant  
The unquestionable good—which, England,  
safe

From interference of external force,  
May grant at leisure; without risk incurred  
That what in wisdom for herself she doth,  
Others shall e'er be able to undo.

Look! and behold, from Calpe's sun-  
burnt cliffs

To the flat margin of the Baltic sea,  
Long-reverenced titles cast away as weeds;  
Laws overturned; and territory split,  
Like fields of ice rent by the polar wind,  
And forced to join in less obnoxious shapes  
Which, ere they gain consistence, by a gust  
Of the same breath are shattered and de-  
stroyed.

Meantime the sovereignty of these fair Isles

Remains entire and indivisible:

And, if that ignorance were removed, which  
breeds

Within the compass of their several shores  
Dark discontent, or loud commotion, each  
Might still preserve the beautiful repose  
Of heavenly bodies shining in their spheres.

—The discipline of slavery is unknown  
Among us,—hence the more do we require  
The discipline of virtue; order else  
Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace.  
Thus, duties rising out of good possess,  
And prudent caution needful to avert  
Impending evil, equally require  
That the whole people should be taught  
and trained.

So shall licentiousness and black resolve  
Be rooted out, and virtuous habits take  
Their place; and genuine piety descend,  
Like an inheritance, from age to age.

With such foundations laid, avault the  
fear

Of numbers crowded on their native soil,  
To the prevention of all healthful growth  
Through mutual injury! Rather in the law  
Of increase and the mandate from above  
Rejoice!—and ye have special cause for joy.  
—For, as the element of air affords  
An easy passage to the industrious bees  
Fraught with their burthens; and a way as  
smooth

For those ordained to take their sounding  
flight

From the thronged hive, and settle where  
they list

In fresh abodes—their labour to renew;  
So the wide waters, open to the power,  
The will, the instincts, and appointed needs  
Of Britain, do invite her to cast off  
Her swarms, and in succession send them  
forth;

Bound to establish new communities  
On every shore whose aspect favours hope  
Or bold adventure; promising to skill  
And perseverance their deserved reward.

Yes," he continued, kindling as he  
spake,

"Change wide, and deep, and silently per-  
formed,

This Land shall witness; and as days  
roll on,

Earth's universal frame shall feel the effect;

Even till the smallest habitable rock,  
Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs  
Of humanised society; and bloom  
With civil arts, that shall breathe forth  
their fragrance,

A grateful tribute to all-ruling Heaven.  
From culture, unexclusively bestowed  
On Albion's noble Race in freedom born,  
Expect these mighty issues: from the pains  
And faithful care of unambitious schools  
Instructing simple childhood's ready ear:  
Thence look for these magnificent results!  
—Vast the circumference of hope—and ye  
Are at its centre, British Lawgivers;  
Ah! sleep not there in shame! Shall  
Wisdom's voice

From out the bosom of these troubled times  
Repeat the dictates of her calmer mind,  
And shall the venerable halls ye fill  
Refuse to echo the sublime decree?  
Trust not to partial care a general good;  
Transfer not to futurity a work  
Of urgent need.—Your Country must complete

Her glorious destiny. Begin even now,  
Now, when oppression, like the Egyptian plague  
Of darkness, stretched o'er guilty Europe,  
makes

The brightness more conspicuous that  
invests

The happy Island where ye think and act;  
Now, when destruction is a prime pursuit,  
Show to the wretched nations for what end  
The powers of civil polity were given."

Abruptly here, but with a graceful air,  
The Sage broke off. No sooner had he  
ceased

Than, looking forth, the gentle Lady said,  
"Behold the shades of afternoon have fallen  
Upon this flowery slope; and see—be-  
yond—

The silvery lake is streaked with placid  
blue;

As if preparing for the peace of evening.  
How temptingly the landscape shines!  
The air

Breathes invitation; easy is the walk  
To the lake's margin, where a boat lies  
moored

Under a sheltering tree."—Upon this hint  
We rose together; all were pleased; but  
most

The beauteous girl, whose cheek was flushed  
with joy.

Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills  
She vanished—eager to impart the scheme  
To her loved brother and his shy compeer.  
—Now was there bustle in the Vicar's  
house

And earnest preparation.—Forth we went,  
And down the vale along the streamlet's  
edge

Pursued our way, a broken company,  
Mute or conversing, single or in pairs.  
Thus having reached a bridge, that over-  
arched

The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed  
In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw  
A twofold image; on a grassy bank  
A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood  
Another and the same! Most beautiful,  
On the green turf, with his imperial front  
Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns  
superb,

The breathing creature stood; as beautiful,  
Beneath him, showed his shadowy counter-  
part.

Each had his glowing mountains, each his  
sky,

And each seemed centre of his own fair  
world;

Antipodes unconscious of each other,  
Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,  
Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight!

"Ah! what a pity were it to disperse,  
Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle,  
And yet a breath can do it!"

These few words  
The Lady whispered, while we stood and  
gazed

Gathered together, all in still delight,  
Not without awe. Thence passing on,  
she said

In like low voice to my particular ear,  
"I love to hear that eloquent old Man  
Pour forth his meditations, and descant  
On human life from infancy to age.  
How pure his spirit! in what vivid hues  
His mind gives back the various forms of  
things,

Caught in their fairest, happiest, attitude!  
While he is speaking, I have power to see  
Even as he sees; but when his voice hath  
ceased,

Then, with a sigh, sometimes I feel, as now,

That combinations so serene and bright  
 Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,  
 Whose highest beauty, beautiful as it is,  
 Like that reflected in yon quiet pool,  
 Seems but a fleeting sunbeam's gift, whose  
 peace,

The sufferance only of a breath of air !"

More had she said—but sportive shouts  
 were heard

Sent from the jocund hearts of those two  
 Boys,

Who, bearing each a basket on his arm,  
 Down the green field came tripping after  
 us.

With caution we embarked; and now the  
 pair

For prouder service were address; but each,  
 Wishful to leave an opening for my choice,  
 Dropped the light oar his eager hand had  
 seized.

Thanks given for that becoming courtesy,  
 Their place I took—and for a grateful  
 office

Pregnant with recollections of the time  
 When, on thy bosom, spacious Winder-  
 mere !

A Youth, I practised this delightful art ;  
 Tossed on the waves alone, or 'mid a crew  
 Of joyous comrades. Soon as the reedy  
 marge

Was cleared, I dipped, with arms accord-  
 ant, oars

Free from obstruction; and the boat ad-  
 vanced

Through crystal water, smoothly as a hawk,  
 That, disentangled from the shady boughs  
 Of some thick wood, her place of covert,  
 cleaves

With correspondent wings the abyss of air.  
 —"Observe," the Vicar said, "yon rocky  
 isle

With birch-trees fringed; my hand shall  
 guide the helm,

While thitherward we shape our course;  
 or while

We seek that other, on the western shore;  
 Where the bare columns of those lofty firs,  
 Supporting gracefully a massy dome  
 Of sombre foliage, seem to imitate  
 A Grecian temple rising from the Deep."

"Turn where we may," said I, "we  
 cannot err

In this delicious region."—Cultured slopes,  
 Wild tracts of forest-ground, and scattered  
 groves,

And mountains bare, or clothed with  
 ancient woods,

Surrounded us; and, as we held our way  
 Along the level of the glassy flood,  
 They ceased not to surround us; change  
 of place

From kindred features diversely combined,  
 Producing change of beauty ever new.

—Ah! that such beauty, varying in the  
 light

Of living nature, cannot be portrayed  
 By words, nor by the pencil's silent skill;  
 But is the property of him alone  
 Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,  
 And in his mind recorded it with love!

Suffice it, therefore, if the rural Muse  
 Vouchsafe sweet influence, while her Poet  
 speaks

Of trivial occupations well devised,  
 And unsought pleasures springing up by  
 chance;

As if some friendly Genius had ordained  
 That, as the day thus far had been en-  
 riched

By acquisition of sincere delight,  
 The same should be continued to its close.

One spirit animating old and young,  
 A gipsy-fire we kindled on the shore  
 Of the fair Isle with birch-trees fringed—  
 and there,

Merrily seated in a ring, partook  
 A choice repast—served by our young  
 companions

With rival earnestness and kindred glee.  
 Launched from our hands the smooth stone  
 skimmed the lake;

With shouts we raised the echoes:—stiller  
 sounds

The lovely Girl supplied—a simple song,  
 Whose low tones reached not to the distant  
 rocks

To be repeated thence, but gently sank  
 Into our hearts; and charmed the peaceful  
 flood.

Rapaciously we gathered flowery spoils  
 From land and water; lilies of each hue—  
 Golden and white, that float upon the  
 waves,

And court the wind; and leaves of that  
 shy plant,

(Her flowers were shed) the lily of the vale,  
That loves the ground, and from the sun  
withholds

Her pensive beauty; from the breeze her  
sweets.

Such product, and such pastime, did  
the place

And season yield; but, as we re-embarked,  
Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the shore  
Of that wild spot, the Solitary said

In a low voice, yet careless who might hear,  
"The fire, that burned so brightly to our  
wish,

Where is it now?—Deserted on the beach—  
Dying, or dead! Nor shall the fanning  
breeze

Revive its ashes. What care we for this,  
Whose ends are gained? Behold an emblem  
here

Of one day's pleasure, and all mortal joys!  
And, in this unpremeditated slight  
Of that which is no longer needed, see  
'The common course of human gratitude!'

This plaintive note disturbed not the  
repose

Of the still evening. Right across the lake  
Our pinnacle moves; then, coasting creek  
and bay,

Glades we behold, and into thickets peep,  
Where couch the spotted deer; or raised  
our eyes

To shaggy steeps on which the careless goat  
Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls;  
And thus the bark, meandering with the  
shore,

Pursued her voyage, till a natural pier  
Of jutting rock invited us to land.

Alert to follow as the Pastor led,  
We clomb a green hill's side; and, as we  
clomb,

The Valley, opening out her bosom, gave  
Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,  
O'er the flat meadows and indented coast  
Of the smooth lake, in compass seen:—  
far off,

And yet conspicuous, stood the old Church-  
tower,

In majesty presiding over fields  
And habitations seemingly preserved  
From all intrusion of the restless world  
By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

Soft heath this elevated spot supplied,  
And choice of moss-clad stones, whereon  
we couched

Or sate reclined; admiring quietly  
The general aspect of the scene; but each  
Not seldom over anxious to make known  
His own discoveries; or to favourite points  
Directing notice, merely from a wish  
To impart a joy, imperfect while unshared.  
That rapturous moment never shall I forget  
When these particular interests were effaced  
From every mind!—Already had the sun,  
Sinking with less than ordinary state,  
Attained his western bound; but rays of  
light—

Now suddenly diverging from the orb  
Retired behind the mountain tops or veiled  
By the dense air—shot upwards to the crown  
Of the blue firmament—aloft, and wide:  
And multitudes of little floating clouds,  
Through their ethereal texture pierced—ere  
we,

Who saw, of change were conscious—had  
become

Vivid as fire; clouds separately poised,—  
Innumerable multitude of forms  
Scattered through half the circle of the sky;  
And giving back, and shedding each on each,  
With prodigal communion, the bright hues  
Which from the unapparent fount of glory  
They had imbibed, and ceased not to receive.  
That which the heavens displayed, the liquid  
deep

Repeated; but with unity sublime!

While from the grassy mountain's open  
side

We gazed, in silence hushed, with eyes  
intent

On the refulgent spectacle, diffused  
Through earth, sky, water, and all visible  
space,

The Priest in holy transport thus exclaimed:  
"Eternal Spirit! universal God!  
Power inaccessible to human thought,  
Save by degrees and steps which thou hast  
deigned

To furnish; for this effluence of thyself,  
To the infirmity of mortal sense  
Vouchsafed; this local transitory type  
Of thy paternal splendours, and the pomp  
Of those who fill thy courts in highest  
heaven,

The radiant Cherubim;—accept the thanks

Which we, thy humble Creatures, here  
 convened,  
 Presume to offer; we, who—from the breast  
 Of the frail earth, permitted to behold  
 The faint reflections only of thy face—  
 Are yet exalted, and in soul adore!  
 Such as they are who in thy presence stand  
 Unsullied, incorruptible, and drink  
 Imperishable majesty streamed forth  
 From thy empyreal throne, the elect of earth  
 Shall be—divested at the appointed hour  
 Of all dishonour, cleansed from mortal  
 stain.

—Accomplish, then, their number; and  
 conclude

Time's weary course! Or if, by thy decree,  
 The consummation that will come by stealth  
 Be yet far distant, let thy Word prevail,  
 Oh! let thy Word prevail, to take away  
 The sting of human nature. Spread the  
 law,

As it is written in thy holy book,  
 Throughout all lands; let every nation hear  
 The high behest, and every heart obey;  
 Both for the love of purity, and hope  
 Which it affords, to such as do thy will  
 And persevere in good, that they shall rise,  
 To have a nearer view of thee, in heaven.

—Father of good! this prayer in bounty  
 grant,

In mercy grant it, to thy wretched sons.  
 Then, not till then, shall persecution cease,  
 And cruel wars expire. The way is marked,  
 The guide appointed, and the ransom paid.  
 Alas! the nations, who of yore received  
 These tidings, and in Christian temples  
 meet

The sacred truth to knowledge, linger  
 still;

Preferring bonds and darkness to a state  
 Of holy freedom, by redeeming love  
 Proffered to all, while yet on earth detained.

So fare the many; and the thoughtful  
 few,

Who in the anguish of their souls bewail  
 This dire perverseness, cannot choose but  
 ask,

Shall it endure?—Shall enmity and strife,  
 Falseness and guile, be left to sow their  
 seed;

And the kind never perish? Is the hope  
 Fallacious, or shall righteousness obtain  
 A peaceable dominion, wide as earth,

And ne'er to fail? Shall that blest day  
 arrive

When they, whose choice or lot it is to  
 dwell

In crowded cities, without fear shall live  
 Studios of mutual benefit; and he,  
 Whom Morn awakens, among dews and  
 flowers

Of every clime, to till the lonely field,  
 Be happy in himself?—The law of faith  
 Working through love, such conquest shall  
 it gain,

Such triumph over sin and guilt achieve?  
 Almighty Lord, thy further grace impart!  
 And with that help the wonder shall be seen  
 Fulfilled, the hope accomplished; and thy  
 praise

Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.

Once," and with mild demeanour, as he  
 spake,

On us the venerable Pastor turned  
 His beaming eye that had been raised to  
 Heaven,

"Once, while the Name, Jehovah, was a  
 sound

Within the circuit of this sea-girt isle  
 Unheard, the savage nations bowed the  
 head

To Gods delighting in remorseless deeds;  
 Gods which themselves had fashioned, to  
 promote

Ill purposes, and flatter foul desires.  
 Then, in the bosom of yon mountain-cove,  
 To those inventions of corrupted man  
 Mysterious rites were solemnised; and  
 there—

Amid impending rocks and gloomy woods—  
 Of those terrific Idols some received  
 Such dismal service, that the loudest voice  
 Of the swollen cataracts (which now are  
 heard

Soft murmuring) was too weak to overcome,  
 Though aided by wild winds, the groans  
 and shrieks

Of human victims, offered up to appease  
 Or to propitiate. And, if living eyes  
 Had visionary faculties to see  
 The thing that hath been as the thing  
 that is,

Aghast we might behold this crystal Mere  
 Bedimmed with smoke, in wreaths volumi-  
 nous,

Flung from the body of devouring fires,

To Taranis erected on the heights  
By priestly hands, for sacrifice performed  
Exultingly, in view of open day  
And full assemblage of a barbarous host ;  
Or to Andates, female Power ! who gave  
(For so they fancied) glorious victory.

—A few rude monuments of mountain-  
stone

Survive ; all else is swept away. — How  
bright

The appearances of things ! From such,  
how changed

The existing worship ; and with those com-  
pared,

The worshippers how innocent and blest !  
So wide the difference, a willing mind  
Might almost think, at this affecting hour,  
That paradise, the lost abode of man,  
Was raised again : and to a happy few,  
In its original beauty, here restored.

Whence but from thee, the true and  
only God,

And from the faith derived through Him  
who bled

Upon the cross, this marvellous advance  
Of good from evil ; as if one extreme  
Were left, the other gained. — O ye, who  
come

To kneel devoutly in yon reverend Pile,  
Called to such office by the peaceful sound  
Of sabbath bells ; and ye, who sleep in  
earth,

All cares forgotten, round its hallowed  
walls !

For you, in presence of this little band  
Gathered together on the green hill-side,  
Your Pastor is emboldened to prefer  
Vocal thanksgivings to the eternal King ;  
Whose love, whose counsel, whose com-  
mands, have made

Your very poorest rich in peace of thought  
And in good works ; and him, who is en-  
dowed

With scantiest knowledge, master of all  
truth

Which the salvation of his soul requires.  
Conscious of that abundant favour showered  
On you, the children of my humble care,  
And this dear land, our country, while on  
earth

We sojourn, have I lifted up my soul,  
Joy giving voice to fervent gratitude.  
These barren rocks, your stern inheritance ;

These fertile fields, that recompense your  
pains ;

The shadowy vale, the sunny mountain-  
top ;

Woods waving in the wind their lofty heads,  
Or hushed ; the roaring waters and the  
still—

They see the offering of my lifted hands,  
They hear my lips present their sacrifice,  
They know if I be silent, morn or even :  
For, though in whispers speaking, the full  
heart

Will find a vent ; and thought is praise to  
him,

Audible praise, to thee, omniscient Mind,  
From whom all gifts descend, all blessings  
flow !”

This vesper-service closed, without delay,  
From that exalted station to the plain  
Descending, we pursued our homeward  
course,

In mute composure, o'er the shadowy lake,  
Under a faded sky. No trace remained  
Of those celestial splendours ; grey the  
vault—

Pure, cloudless, ether ; and the star of eve  
Was wanting ; but inferior lights appeared  
Faintly, too faint almost for sight ; and  
some

Above the darkened hills stood boldly forth  
In twinkling lustre, ere the boat attained  
Her mooring-place ; where, to the shelter-  
ing tree,

Our youthful Voyagers bound fast her prow,  
With prompt yet careful hands. This  
done, we paced

The dewy fields ; but ere the Vicar's door  
Was reached, the Solitary checked his  
steps ;

Then, intermingling thanks, on each be-  
stowed

A farewell salutation ; and, the like  
Receiving, took the slender path that leads  
To the one cottage in the lonely dell :

But turned not without welcome promise  
made

That he would share the pleasures and  
pursuits

Of yet another summer's day, not loth  
To wander with us through the fertile vales,  
And o'er the mountain-wastes. “ Another  
sun,”

Said he, “ shall shine upon us, ere we part ;

Another sun, and peradventure more;  
If time, with free consent, be yours to give,  
And season favours."

To enfeebled Power,  
From this communion with uninjured  
Minds,

What renovation had been brought; and  
what

Degree of healing to a wounded spirit,  
Dejected, and habitually disposed  
To seek, in degradation of the Kind,  
Excuse and solace for her own defects;  
How far those erring notions were reformed;  
And whether aught, of tendency as good  
And pure, from further intercourse ensued;  
This—if delightful hopes, as heretofore,  
Inspire the serious song, and gentle Hearts  
Cherish, and lofty Minds approve the past—  
My future labours may not leave untold.

1795-1814.

### LAODAMIA

Written at Rydal Mount. The incident of the trees growing and withering put the subject into my thoughts, and I wrote with the hope of giving it a loftier tone than, so far as I know, has been given to it by any of the Ancients who have treated of it. It cost me more trouble than almost anything of equal length I have ever written.

"WITH sacrifice before the rising morn  
Vows have I made by fruitless hope in-  
spired;  
And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades  
forlorn  
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I re-  
quired:  
Celestial pity I again implore;—  
Restore him to my sight—great Jove,  
restore!"

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed  
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts  
her hands;  
While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,  
Her countenance brightens—and her eye  
expands;  
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature  
grows;  
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived?—O  
joy!

What doth she look on?—whom doth she  
behold?

Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy?  
His vital presence? his corporeal mould?  
It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis He!  
And a God leads him, winged Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her with  
his wand

That calms all fear; "Such grace hath  
crowned thy prayer,  
Laodamia! that at Jove's command  
Thy Husband walks the paths of upper air:  
He comes to tarry with thee three hours'  
space;  
Accept the gift, behold him face to face!"

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her  
Lord to clasp;

Again that consummation she essayed;  
But unsubstantial Form eludes her grasp  
As often as that eager grasp was made.  
The Phantom parts—but parts to re-unite,  
And re-assume his place before her sight.

"Protesilaus, lo! thy guide is gone!  
Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice:  
This is our palace,—yonder is thy throne;  
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will  
rejoice.

Not to appal me have the gods bestowed  
This precious boon; and blest a sad abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamia! doth not leave  
His gifts imperfect:—Spectre though I be,  
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive;  
But in reward of thy fidelity.  
And something also did my worth obtain;  
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

"Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold  
That the first Greek who touched the Tro-  
jan strand  
Should die; but me the threat could not  
withhold:

A generous cause a victim did demand;  
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain;  
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest,  
best!

Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,  
Which then, when tens of thousands were  
deprest

By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore;  
Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—here  
thou art—

A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

"But thou, though capable of sternest deed,  
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave;  
And he, whose power restores thee, hath  
decreed

Thou should'st elude the malice of the  
grave:

Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair  
As when their breath enriched Thessalian  
air.

"No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow  
this;

Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my  
side!

Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial  
kiss

To me, this day, a second time thy bride!"  
Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious  
Parcæ threw

Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

"This visage tells thee that my doom is  
past:

Nor should the change be mourned, even if  
the joys

Of sense were able to return as fast  
And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys  
Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains:  
Calm pleasures there abide—majestic pains.

"Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control  
Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve  
The depth, and not the tumult, of the  
soul;

A fervent, not ungovernable, love.  
Thy transports moderate; and meekly  
mourn

When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—"

"Ah, wherefore?—Did not Hercules by  
force

Wrest from the guardian Monster of the  
tomb

Alceſtis, a reanimated corse,  
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal  
bloom?

Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,  
And Æſon stood a youth 'mid youthful  
peers.

"The Gods to us are merciful—and they  
Yet further may relent: for mightier far  
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the  
sway

Of magic potent over sun and star,  
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,  
And though his favourite seat be feeble  
woman's breast.

"But if thou goest, I follow—" "Peace!"  
he said,—

She looked upon him and was calmed and  
cheered;

The ghastly colour from his lips had fled;  
In his deportment, shape, and mien,  
appeared

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,  
Brought from a pensive though a happy  
place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel  
In worlds whose course is equable and  
pure;

No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—  
The past unsighed for, and the future sure;  
Spake of heroic arts in graver mood  
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beautiful—imaged there  
In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,  
An ampler ether, a diviner air,  
And fields invested with purple gleams;  
Climes which the sun, who sheds the  
brightest day

Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath  
earned

That privilege by virtue.—"Ill," said he,  
"The end of man's existence I discerned,  
Who from ignoble games and revelry  
Could draw, when we had parted, vain  
delight,

While tears were thy best pastime, day and  
night;

"And while my youthful peers before my  
eyes

(Each hero following his peculiar bent)  
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise  
By martial sports,—or, seated in the tent,  
Chieftains and kings in council were de-  
tained;

What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.



"The wished-for wind was given :—I then  
revolved

The oracle, upon the silent sea ;  
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved  
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be  
The foremost prow in pressing to the  
strand,—

Mine the blood that tinged the Trojan  
sand.

"Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang  
When of thy loss I thought, beloved Wife !  
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,  
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,—  
The paths which we had trod—these foun-  
tains, flowers

My new-planned cities, and unfinished  
towers.

"But should suspense permit the Foe to cry,  
'Behold they tremble !—haughty their  
array,

Yet of their number no one dares to die ?'  
In soul I swept the indignity away :  
Old frailties then recurred :—but lofty  
thought,

In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

"And Thou, though strong in love, art all  
too weak

In reason, in self-government too slow ;  
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek  
Our blest re-union in the shades below.  
The invisible world with thee hath sym-  
pathised ;

Be thy affections raised and solemnised.

"Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—  
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,  
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that  
end ;

For this the passion to excess was driven—  
That self might be annulled : her bondage  
prove

The fetters of a dream, opposed to  
love."——

Aloud she shrieked ! for Hermes re-  
appears !

Round the dear Shade she would have  
clung—'tis vain :

The hours are past—too brief had they  
been years ;

And him no mortal effort can detain :

Swift, toward the realms that know not  
earthly day,

He through the portal takes his silent way,  
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse She  
lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,  
She perished ; and, as for a wilful crime,  
By the just Gods whom no weak pity  
moved,

Was doomed to wear out her appointed  
time,

Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather  
flowers

Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

—Yet tears to human suffering are due ;  
And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown  
Are mourned by man, and not by man  
alone,

As fondly he believes.—Upon the side  
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)

A knot of spiry trees for ages grew  
From out the tomb of him for whom she  
died ;

And ever, when such stature they had  
gained

That Ilium's walls were subject to their  
view,

The trees' tall summits withered at the  
sight ;

A constant interchange of growth and  
blight !<sup>1</sup>

1814.

## DION

(SEE PLUTARCH)

This poem was first introduced by a stanza  
that I have since transferred to the Notes, for  
reasons there given, and I cannot comply with  
the request expressed by some of my friends that  
the rejected stanza should be restored. I hope  
they will be content if it be, hereafter, immediately  
attached to the poem, instead of its being degraded  
to a place in the Notes.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the account of these long-lived trees,  
see Pliny's *Natural History*, lib. xvi. cap. 44 ;  
and for the features in the character of Protesilaus  
see the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides. Virgil  
places the Shade of Laodamia in a mournful  
region, among unhappy Lovers,

"—— His Laodamia,  
It comes, ——"

<sup>2</sup> See Note.

## I

SERENE, and fitted to embrace,  
Where'er he turned, a swan-like grace  
Of haughtiness without pretence,  
And to unfold a still magnificence,  
Was princely Dion, in the power  
And beauty of his happier hour.  
And what pure homage *then* did wait  
On Dion's virtues, while the lunar beam  
Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,  
Fell round him in the grove of Academe,  
Softening their inbred dignity austere—

That he, not too elate  
With self-sufficing solitude,  
But with majestic lowliness endued,  
Might in the universal bosom reign,  
And from affectionate observance gain  
Help, under every change of adverse fate.

## II

Five thousand warriors—O the rapturous  
day!

Each crowned with flowers, and armed  
with spear and shield,  
Or ruder weapon which their course might  
yield,

To Syracuse advance in bright array.  
Who leads them on?—The anxious people  
see

Long-exiled Dion marching at their head,  
He also crowned with flowers of Sicily,  
And in a white, far-beaming, corselet clad!  
Pure transport undisturbed by doubt or fear  
The gazers feel; and, rushing to the plain,  
Salute those strangers as a holy train  
Or blest procession (to the Immortals dear)  
That brought their precious liberty again.  
Lo! when the gates are entered, on each  
hand,

Down the long street, rich goblets filled  
with wine

In seemly order stand,  
On tables set, as if for rites divine;—  
And, as the great Deliverer marches by,  
He looks on festal ground with fruits  
bestrown;

And flowers are on his person thrown  
In boundless prodigality;  
Nor doth the general voice abstain from  
prayer,

Invoking Dion's tutelary care,  
As if a very Deity he were!

## III

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica! and  
mourn

Ilissus, bending o'er thy classic urn!  
Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit  
dreads

Your once sweet memory, studious walks  
and shades!

For him who to divinity aspired,  
Not on the breath of popular applause,  
But through dependence on the sacred laws  
Framed in the schools where Wisdom  
dwelt retired,

Intent to trace the ideal path of right  
(More fair than heaven's broad causeway  
paved with stars)

Which Dion learned to measure with sub-  
lime delight;—

But He hath overleaped the eternal bars;  
And, following guides whose craft holds no  
consent

With aught that breathes the ethereal  
element,

Hath stained the robes of civil power with  
blood,

Unjustly shed, though for the public good.  
Whence doubts that came too late, and  
wishes vain,

Hollow excuses, and triumphant pain;  
And oft his cogitations sink as low  
As, through the abysses of a joyless heart,  
The heaviest plummet of despair can go—  
But whence that sudden check? that fearful  
start!

He hears an uncouth sound—  
Anon his lifted eyes

Saw, at a long-drawn gallery's dusky bound.  
A Shape of more than mortal size  
And hideous aspect, stalking round and  
round!

A woman's garb the Phantom wore,  
And fiercely swept the marble floor,—  
Like Auster whirling to and fro,  
His force on Caspian foam to try;  
Or Boreas when he scours the snow  
That skins the plains of Thessaly,  
Or when aloft on Mænalus he stops  
His flight, 'mid eddying pine-tree tops!

## IV

So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,  
The sullen Spectre to her purpose bowed,  
Sweeping—vehemently sweeping—

No pause admitted, no design avowed !  
 "Avaunt, inexplicable Guest !—avaunt,"  
 Exclaimed the Chieftain—"let me rather  
     see  
 The coronal that coiling vipers make ;  
 The torch that flames with many a lurid  
     flake,  
 And the long train of doleful pageantry  
 Which they behold, whom vengeful Furies  
     haunt ;  
 Who, while they struggle from the scourge  
     to flee,  
 Move where the blasted soil is not unworn,  
 And, in their anguish, bear what other  
     minds have borne !"

## V

But Shapes that come not at an earthly call,  
 Will not depart when mortal voices bid ;  
 Lords of the visionary eye whose lid,  
 Once raised, remains aghast, and will not  
     fall !

Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Imple-  
     ment

Obeys a mystical intent !  
 Your Minister would brush away  
 The spots that to my soul adhere ;  
 But should she labour night and day,  
 They will not, cannot disappear ;  
 Whence angry perturbations,—and that  
     look

Which no Philosophy can brook !

## VI

Ill-fated Chief ! there are whose hopes are  
     built

Upon the ruins of thy glorious name ;  
 Who, through the portal of one moment's  
     guilt,

Pursue thee with their deadly aim !  
 O matchless perfidy ! portentous lust  
 Of monstrous crime !—that horror-striking  
     blade,

Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid  
 The noble Syracusan low in dust !  
 Shuddered the walls—the marble city  
     wept—

And sylvan places heaved a pensive sigh ;  
 But in calm peace the appointed Victim  
     slept,

As he had fallen in magnanimity ;  
 Of spirit too capacious to require

That Destiny her course should change ;  
     too just

To his own native greatness to desire  
 That wretched boon, days lengthened by  
     mistrust.

So were the hopeless troubles, that involved  
 The soul of Dion, instantly dissolved.  
 Released from life and cares of princely  
     state,

He left this moral grafted on his Fate ;  
 "Him only pleasure leads, and peace  
     attends,

Him, only him, the shield of Jove defends,  
 Whose means are fair and spotless as his  
     ends." 1814.

## MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN SCOTLAND

1814

IN this tour, my wife and her sister Sara were my companions. The account of the "Brownie's Cell" and the Brownies was given me by a man we met with on the banks of Loch Lomond, a little above Tarbert, and in front of a huge mass of rock, by the side of which, we were told, preachings were often held in the open air. The place is quite a solitude, and the surrounding scenery very striking. How much is it to be regretted that, instead of writing such Poems as the "Holy Fair" and others, in which the religious observances of his country are treated with so much levity and too often with indecency, Burns had not employed his genius in describing religion under the serious and affecting aspects it must so frequently take.

## I

SUGGESTED BY A BEAUTIFUL RUIN UPON  
 ONE OF THE ISLANDS OF LOCH LOMOND,  
 A PLACE CHOSEN FOR THE RETREAT  
 OF A SOLITARY INDIVIDUAL, FROM  
 WHOM THIS HABITATION ACQUIRED  
 THE NAME OF

### THE BROWNIE'S CELL

## I

To barren heath, bleak moor, and quaking  
     fen,

Or depth of labyrinthine glen ;  
 Or into trackless forest set

With trees, whose lofty umbrage met ;

World-wearied Men withdrew of yore ;  
 (Penance their trust, and prayer their store ;)  
 And in the wilderness were bound  
 To such apartments as they found,  
 Or with a new ambition raised ;  
 That God might suitably be praised.

## II

High lodged the *Warrior*, like a bird of prey ;  
 Or where broad waters round him lay :  
 But this wild Ruin is no ghost  
 Of his devices—buried, lost !  
 Within this little lonely isle  
 There stood a consecrated Pile ;  
 Where tapers burned, and mass was sung,  
 For them whose timid Spirits clung  
 To mortal succour, though the tomb  
 Had fixed, for ever fixed, their doom !

## III

Upon those servants of another world  
 When madding Power her bolts had hurled,  
 Their habitation shook ;—it fell,  
 And perished, save one narrow cell ;  
 Whither, at length, a Wretch retired  
 Who neither grovelled nor aspired :  
 He, struggling in the net of pride,  
 The future scorned, the past defied ;  
 Still tempering, from the unguilty forge  
 Of vain conceit, an iron scourge !

## IV

Proud Remnant was he of a fearless Race,  
 Who stood and flourished face to face  
 With their perennial hills ;—but Crime,  
 Hastening the stern decrees of Time,  
 Brought low a Power, which from its home  
 Burst, when repose grew wearisome ;  
 And, taking impulse from the sword,  
 And, mocking its own plighted word,  
 Had found, in ravage widely dealt,  
 Its warfare's bourn, its travel's belt !

## V

All, all were dispossessed, save him whose smile  
 Shot lightning through this lonely Isle !  
 No right had he but what he made  
 To this small spot, his leafy shade ;  
 But the ground lay within that ring  
 To which he only dared to cling ;

Renouncing here, as worse than dead,  
 The craven few who bowed the head  
 Beneath the change ; who heard a claim  
 How loud ! yet lived in peace with shame.

## VI

From year to year this shaggy Mortal went  
 (So seemed it) down a strange descent :  
 Till they, who saw his outward frame,  
 Fixed on him an unhallowed name ;  
 Him, free from all malicious taint,  
 And guiding, like the Patmos Saint,  
 A pen unwearied—to indite,  
 In his lone Isle, the dreams of night ;  
 Impassioned dreams, that strove to span  
 The faded glories of his Clan !

## VII

Suns that through blood their western  
 harbour sought,  
 And stars that in their courses fought ;  
 Towers rent, winds combating with woods,  
 Lands deluged by unbridled floods ;  
 And beast and bird that from the spell  
 Of sleep took import terrible ;—  
 These types mysterious (if the show  
 Of battle and the routed foe  
 Had failed) would furnish an array  
 Of matter for the dawning day !

## VIII

How disappeared He?—ask the newt and toad,  
 Inheritors of his abode ;  
 The otter crouching undisturbed,  
 In her dank cleft ;—but be thou curbed,  
 O froward Fancy ! 'mid a scene  
 Of aspect winning and serene ;  
 For those offensive creatures shun  
 The inquisition of the sun !  
 And in this region flowers delight,  
 And all is lovely to the sight.

## IX

Spring finds not here a melancholy breast,  
 When she applies her annual test  
 To dead and living ; when her breath  
 Quickens, as now, the withered heath ;—  
 Nor flaunting Summer—when he throws  
 His soul into the briar-rose ;  
 Or calls the lily from her sleep  
 Prolonged beneath the bordering deep ;

Nor Autumn, when the viewless wren  
Is warbling near the BROWNIE'S Den.

## X

Wild Relique! beauteous as the chosen  
spot

In Nysa's isle, the embellished grot;  
Whither, by care of Libyan Jove,  
(High Servant of paternal Love)  
Young Bacchus was conveyed—to lie  
Safe from his step-dame Rhea's eye;  
Where bud, and bloom, and fruitage,  
glowed,

Close-crowding round the infant-god;  
All colours,—and the liveliest streak  
A foil to his celestial cheek!

## II

## COMPOSED AT CORA LINN,

## IN SIGHT OF WALLACE'S TOWER

I had seen this celebrated Waterfall twice before; but the feelings, to which it had given birth, were not expressed till they recurred in presence of the object on this occasion.

—How Wallace fought for Scotland, left the name  
Of Wallace to be found, like a wild flower,  
All over his dear Country; left the deeds  
Of Wallace, like a family of ghosts,  
To people the steep rocks and river banks,  
Her natural sanctuaries, with a local soul  
Of independence and stern liberty.—See p. 238.

LORD of the vale! astounding Flood;  
The dullest leaf in this thick wood  
Quakes—conscious of thy power;  
The caves reply with hollow moan;  
And vibrates, to its central stone,  
Yon time-cemented Tower!

And yet how fair the rural scene!  
For thou, O Clyde, hast ever been  
Beneficent as strong;  
Pleased in refreshing dews to steep  
The little trembling flowers that peep  
Thy shelving rocks among.

Hence all who love their country, love  
To look on thee—delight to rove  
Where they thy voice can hear;  
And, to the patriot-warrior's Shade,  
Lord of the vale! to Heroes laid  
In dust, that voice is dear!

Along thy banks, at dead of night  
Sweeps visibly the Wallace Wight;  
Or stands, in warlike vest,  
Aloft, beneath the moon's pale beam,  
A Champion worthy of the stream,  
Yon grey tower's living crest!

But clouds and envious darkness hide  
A Form not doubtfully descried:—  
Their transient mission o'er,  
O say to what blind region flee  
These Shapes of awful phantasy?  
To what untrodden shore?

Less than divine command they spurn;  
But this we from the mountains learn,  
And this the valleys show;  
That never will they deign to hold  
Communion where the heart is cold  
To human weal and woe.

The man of abject soul in vain  
Shall walk the Marathonian plain;  
Or thrid the shadowy gloom,  
That still invests the guardian Pass,  
Where stood, sublime, Leonidas  
Devoted to the tomb.

And let no Slave his head incline,  
Or kneel, before the votive shrine  
By Uri's lake, where Tell  
Leapt, from his storm-vest boat, to land,  
Heaven's Instrument, for by his hand  
That day the Tyrant fell.

## III

## EFFUSION

IN THE PLEASURE-GROUND ON THE BANKS  
OF THE BRAN, NEAR DUNKELD

I am not aware that this condemnatory effusion was ever seen by the owner of the place. He might be disposed to pay little attention to it: but were it to prove otherwise I should be glad, for the whole exhibition is distressingly puerile.

"The waterfall, by a loud roaring, warned us when we must expect it. We were first, however, conducted into a small apartment, where the Gardener desired us to look at a picture of Ossian, which, while he was telling the history of the young Artist who executed the work, disappeared, parting in the middle—flying asunder as by the touch of magic—and lo! we are at the entrance

of a splendid apartment, which was almost dizzy and alive with waterfalls, that tumbled in all directions; the great cascade, opposite the window, which faced us, being reflected in innumerable mirrors upon the ceiling and against the walls."—*Extract from the Journal of my Fellow-Traveller.*

WHAT He—who, 'mid the kindred throng  
Of Heroes that inspired his song,  
Doth yet frequent the hill of storms,  
The stars dim-twinkling through their  
forms!

What! Ossian here—a painted Thrall,  
Mute fixture on a stuccoed wall;  
To serve—an unsuspected screen  
For show that must not yet be seen;  
And, when the moment comes, to part  
And vanish by mysterious art;  
Head, harp, and body, split asunder,  
For ingress to a world of wonder;  
A gay saloon, with waters dancing  
Upon the sight wherever glancing;  
One loud cascade in front, and lo!  
A thousand like it, white as snow—  
Streams on the walls, and torrent-foam  
As active round the hollow dome,  
Illusive cataracts! of their terrors  
Not stripped, nor voiceless in the mirrors,  
That catch the pageant from the flood  
Thundering adown a rocky wood.  
What pains to dazzle and confound!  
What strife of colour, shape and sound  
In this quaint medley, that might seem  
Devised out of a sick man's dream!  
Strange scene, fantastic and uneasy  
As ever made a maniac dizzy,  
When disenchanted from the mood  
That loves on sullen thoughts to brood!

O Nature—in thy changeful visions,  
Through all thy most abrupt transitions  
Smooth, graceful, tender, or sublime—  
Ever averse to pantomime,  
Thee neither do they know nor us  
Thy servants, who can trifle thus;  
Else verily the sober powers  
Of rock that frowns, and stream that  
roars,

Exalted by congenial sway  
Of Spirits, and the undying Lay,  
And Names that moulder not away,  
Had wakened some redeeming thought  
More worthy of this favoured Spot;  
Recalled some feeling—to set free  
The Bard from such indignity!

<sup>1</sup> The Effigies of a valiant Wight  
I once beheld, a Templar Knight;  
Not prostrate, not like those that rest  
On tombs, with palms together prest,  
But sculptured out of living stone,  
And standing upright and alone,  
Both hands with rival energy  
Employed in setting his sword free  
From its dull sheath—stern sentinel  
Intent to guard St. Robert's cell;  
As if with memory of the affray  
Far distant, when, as legends say,  
The Monks of Fountain's thronged to force  
From its dear home the Hermit's corse,  
That in their keeping it might lie,  
To crown their abbey's sanctity.  
So had they rushed into the grot  
Of sense despised, a world forgot,  
And torn him from his loved retreat,  
Where altar-stone and rock-hewn seat  
Still hint that quiet best is found,  
Even by the *Living*, under ground;  
But a bold Knight, the selfish aim  
Defeating, put the monks to shame,  
There where you see his Image stand  
Bare to the sky, with threatening brand  
Which lingering Nid is proud to show  
Reflected in the pool below.

Thus, like the men of earliest days,  
Our sires set forth their grateful praise:  
Uncouth the workmanship, and rude!  
But, nursed in mountain solitude,  
Might some aspiring artist dare  
To seize whate'er, through misty air,  
A ghost, by glimpses, may present  
Of imitable lineament,  
And give the phantom an array  
That less should scorn the abandoned clay;  
Then let him hew with patient stroke  
An Ossian out of mural rock,  
And leave the figurative Man—  
Upon thy margin, roaring Bran!—  
Fixed, like the Templar of the steep,  
An everlasting watch to keep;  
With local sanctities in trust,  
More precious than a hermit's dust;  
And virtues through the mass infused,  
Which old idolatry abused.

What though the Granite would deny  
All fervour to the sightless eye;  
And touch from rising suns in vain  
Solicit a Memnonian strain;

<sup>1</sup> On the banks of the River Nid, near Knaresborough.

Yet, in some fit of anger sharp,  
The wind might force the deep-grooved harp  
To utter melancholy moans  
Not unconnected with the tones  
Of soul-sick flesh and weary bones;  
While grove and river notes would lend,  
Less deeply sad, with these to blend!

Vain pleasures of luxurious life,  
For ever with yourselves at strife;  
Through town and country both deranged  
By affectations interchanged,  
And all the perishable gauds  
That heaven-deserted man applauds;  
When will your hapless patrons learn  
To watch and ponder—to discern  
The freshness, the everlasting youth,  
Of admiration sprung from truth;  
From beauty infinitely growing  
Upon a mind with love o'erflowing—  
To sound the depths of every Art  
That seeks its wisdom through the heart?

Thus (where the intrusive Pile, ill-graced  
With baubles of theatric taste,  
O'erlooks the torrent breathing showers  
On motley bands of alien flowers  
In stiff confusion set or sown,  
Till Nature cannot find her own,  
Or keep a remnant of the sod  
Which Caledonian Heroes trod)  
I mused; and, thirsting for redress,  
Recoiled into the wilderness.

## IV

## YARROW VISITED

SEPTEMBER 1814

(See page 195.)

As mentioned in my verses on the death of the Ettrick Shepherd, my first visit to Yarrow was in his company. We had lodged the night before at Traquhair, where Hogg had joined us and also Dr. Anderson, the Editor of the British Poets, who was on a visit at the Manse. Dr. A. walked with us till we came in view of the Vale of Yarrow, and, being advanced in life, he then turned back. The old Man was passionately fond of poetry, though with not much of a discriminating judgment, as the Volumes he edited sufficiently show. But I was much pleased to meet with him, and to acknowledge my obligation to his collection, which had been my brother John's companion in more than one voyage to India, and which he gave me before his departure from Grasmere,

never to return. Through these Volumes I became first familiar with Chaucer, and so little money had I then to spare for books, that, in all probability, but for this same work, I should have known little of Drayton, Daniel, and other distinguished poets of the Elizabethan age, and their immediate successors, till a much later period of my life. I am glad to record this, not from any importance of its own, but as a tribute of gratitude to this simple-hearted old man, whom I never again had the pleasure of meeting. I seldom read or think of this poem without regretting that my dear Sister was not of the party, as she would have had so much delight in recalling the time when, travelling together in Scotland, we declined going in search of this celebrated stream, not altogether, I will frankly confess, for the reasons assigned in the poem on the occasion.

AND is this—Yarrow?—*This* the Stream  
Of which my fancy cherished,  
So faithfully, a waking dream?  
An image that hath perished!  
O that some Minstrel's harp were near,  
To utter notes of gladness,  
And chase this silence from the air,  
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows  
With uncontrolled meanderings;  
Nor have these eyes by greener hills  
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.  
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's  
Lake

Is visibly delighted;  
For not a feature of those hills  
Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,  
Save where that pearly whiteness  
Is round the rising sun diffused,  
A tender hazy brightness;  
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes  
All profitless dejection;  
Though not unwilling here to admit  
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower  
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?  
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound  
On which the herd is feeding:  
And haply from this crystal pool,  
Now peaceful as the morning,  
The Water-wraith ascended thrice—  
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings  
The haunts of happy Lovers,  
The path that leads them to the grove,  
The leafy grove that covers :  
And Pity sanctifies the Verse  
That paints, by strength of sorrow,  
The unconquerable strength of love ;  
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow !

But thou, that didst appear so fair  
To fond imagination,  
Dost rival in the light of day  
Her delicate creation :  
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,  
A softness still and holy ;  
The grace of forest charms decayed,  
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds  
Rich groves of lofty stature,  
With Yarrow winding through the pomp  
Of cultivated nature ;  
And, rising from those lofty groves,  
Behold a Ruin hoary !  
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,  
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,  
For sportive youth to stray in ;  
For manhood to enjoy his strength ;  
And age to wear away in !  
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,  
A covert for protection  
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—  
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,  
The wild-wood fruits to gather,  
And on my True-love's forehead plant  
A crest of blooming heather !  
And what if I enwreathed my own !  
'Twere no offence to reason ;  
The sober Hills thus deck their brows  
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,  
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee ;  
A ray of fancy still survives—  
Her sunshine plays upon thee !  
Thy ever-youthful waters keep  
A course of lively pleasure ;  
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,  
Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the Heights,  
They melt, and soon must vanish ;  
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—  
Sad thought, which I would banish,  
But that I know, where'er I go,  
Thy genuine image, Yarrow !  
Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,  
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

# " FROM THE DARK CHAMBERS OF DEJECTION FREED "

Composed in Edinburgh, during my Scotch tour with Mrs. Wordsworth and my sister Miss Hutchinson, in the year 1814. Poor Gillies never rose above that course of extravagance in which he was at that time living, and which soon reduced him to poverty and all its degrading shifts, mendicity being far from the worst. I grieve whenever I think of him, for he was far from being without genius, and had a generous heart, not always to be found in men given up to profusion. He was nephew of Lord Gillies the Scotch judge, and also of the historian of Greece. He was cousin to Miss Margaret Gillies, who painted so many portraits with success in our house.

FROM the dark chambers of dejection freed,  
Spurning the unprofitable yoke of care,  
Rise, GILLIES, rise ; the gales of youth  
shall bear

Thy genius forward like a winged steed.  
Though bold Bellerophon (so Jove decreed  
In wrath) fell headlong from the fields of air,  
Yet a rich guerdon waits on minds that dare,  
If aught be in them of immortal seed,  
And reason govern that audacious flight  
Which heavenward they direct.—Then  
droop not thou,  
Erroneously renewing a sad vow  
In the low dell 'mid Roslin's faded grove :  
A cheerful life is what the Muses love,  
A soaring spirit is their prime delight.

1814.

## LINES

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF IN A COPY OF  
THE AUTHOR'S POEM "THE EXCURSION," UPON HEARING OF THE DEATH  
OF THE LATE VICAR OF KENDAL.

To public notice, with reluctance strong,  
Did I deliver this unfinished Song ;



Yet for one happy issue;—and I look  
With self-congratulation on the Book  
Which pious, learned, MURFITT saw and  
read;—

Upon my thoughts his saintly Spirit fed;  
He conned the new-born Lay with grateful  
heart—

Foreboding not how soon he must depart;  
Unweeting that to him the joy was given  
Which good men take with them from  
earth to heaven. 1814.

#### TO B. R. HAYDON

HIGH is our calling, Friend!—Creative Art  
(Whether the instrument of words she use,  
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,  
Demands the service of a mind and heart,  
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,  
Heroically fashioned—to infuse  
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,  
While the whole world seems adverse to  
desert.

And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she  
may,  
Through long-lived pressure of obscure dis-  
tress,

Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,  
And in the soul admit of no decay,  
Brook no continuance of weak-minded-  
ness—

Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!  
1815.

#### ARTEGAL AND ELIDURE

(SEE THE CHRONICLE OF GEOFFREY OF  
MONMOUTH AND MILTON'S HISTORY OF  
ENGLAND)

This was written at Rydal Mount, as a token  
of affectionate respect for the memory of Milton.  
"I have determined," says he, in his preface to  
his History of England, "to bestow the telling  
over even of these reputed tales, be it for nothing  
else but in favour of our English Poets and Rhe-  
toricians, who by their wit will know how to use  
them judiciously."

WHERE be the temples which, in Britain's  
Isle,

For his paternal Gods, the Trojan raised?  
Gone like a morning dream, or like a pile  
Of clouds that in cerulean ether blazed!

Ere Julius landed on her white-cliffed shore,  
They sank, delivered o'er  
To fatal dissolution; and, I ween,  
No vestige then was left that such had ever  
been.

Nathless, a British record (long concealed  
In old Armorica, whose secret springs  
No Gothic conqueror ever drank) revealed  
The marvellous current of forgotten things;  
How Brutus came, by oracles impelled,

And Albion's giants quelled,  
A brood whom no civility could melt,  
"Who never tasted grace, and goodness  
ne'er had felt."

By brave Corineus aided, he subdued,  
And rooted out the intolerable kind;  
And this too-long-polluted land imbued  
With goodly arts and usages refined;  
Whence golden harvests, cities, warlike  
towers,

And pleasure's sumptuous bowers;  
Whence all the fixed delights of house and  
home,  
Friendships that will not break, and love  
that cannot roam.

O, happy Britain! region all too fair  
For self-delighting fancy to endure  
That silence only should inhabit there,  
Wild beasts, or uncouth savages impure!  
But, intermingled with the generous seed,  
Grew many a poisonous weed;  
Thus fares it still with all that takes its  
birth  
From human care, or grows upon the  
breast of earth.

Hence, and how soon! that war of ven-  
geance waged

By Guendolen against her faithless lord;  
Till she, in jealous fury unassuaged  
Had slain his paramour with ruthless  
sword:

Then, into Severn hideously defiled,  
She flung her blameless child,  
Sabrina,—vowing that the stream should  
bear

That name through every age, her hatred  
to declare.

So speaks the Chronicle, and tells of Lear  
By his ungrateful daughters turned adrift.

Ye lightnings, hear his voice!—they cannot  
hear,  
Nor can the winds restore his simple gift.  
But One there is, a Child of nature meek,  
Who comes her Sire to seek;  
And he, recovering sense, upon her breast  
Leans smilingly, and sinks into a perfect  
rest.

There too we read of Spenser's fairy  
themes,  
And those that Milton loved in youthful  
years;  
The sage enchanter Merlin's subtle  
schemes;  
The feats of Arthur and his knightly peers;  
Of Arthur,—who, to upper light restored,  
With that terrific sword  
Which yet he brandishes for future war,  
Shall lift his country's fame above the  
polar star!

What wonder, then, if in such ample field  
Of old tradition, one particular flower  
Doth seemingly in vain its fragrance yield,  
And bloom unnoticed even to this late  
hour?

Now, gentle Muses, your assistance grant,  
While I this flower transplant  
Into a garden stored with Poesy;  
Where flowers and herbs unite, and haply  
some weeds be,  
That, wanting not wild grace, are from all  
mischief free!

A KING more worthy of respect and  
love  
Than wise Gorbonian ruled not in his  
day;  
And grateful Britain prospered far above  
All neighbouring countries through his  
righteous sway;  
He poured rewards and honours on the  
good;  
The oppressor he withstood;  
And while he served the Gods with reverence  
due  
Fields smiled, and temples rose, and towns  
and cities grew.

He died, whom Artegal succeeds—his son;  
But how unworthy of that sire was he!  
A hopeful reign, auspiciously begun,  
Was darkened soon by foul iniquity.

From crime to crime he mounted, till at  
length

The nobles leagued their strength  
With a vexed people, and the tyrant chased;  
And, on the vacant throne, his worthier  
Brother placed.

From realm to realm the humbled Exile  
went,

Suppliant for aid his kingdom to regain;  
In many a court, and many a warrior's tent,  
He urged his persevering suit in vain.  
Him, in whose wretched heart ambition  
failed,

Dire poverty assailed;  
And, tired with slights his pride no more  
could brook,  
He towards his native country cast a long-  
ing look.

Fair blew the wished-for wind—the voyage  
sped;

He landed; and, by many dangers scared,  
“Poorly provided, poorly followed,”  
To Calaterium's forest he repaired.  
How changed from him who, born to high-  
est place,

Had swayed the royal mace,  
Flattered and feared, despised yet deified,  
In Troynovant, his seat by silver Thames's  
side!

From that wild region where the crownless  
King

Lay in concealment with his scanty train,  
Supporting life by water from the spring,  
And such chance food as outlaws can ob-  
tain,

Unto the few whom he esteems his friends  
A messenger he sends;  
And from their secret loyalty requires  
Shelter and daily bread,—the sum of his  
desires.

While he the issue waits, at early morn  
Wandering by stealth abroad, he chanced  
to hear

A startling outcry made by hound and  
horn,

From which the tusky wild boar flies in  
fear;

And, scouring toward him o'er the grassy  
plain,

Behold the hunter train!

He bids his little company advance  
With seeming unconcern and steady countenance.

The royal Elidure, who leads the chase,  
Hath checked his foaming courser :—can it be!

Methinks that I should recognise that face,  
Though much disguised by long adversity!  
He gazed rejoicing, and again he gazed,  
Confounded and amazed—

"It is the king, my brother!" and, by sound

Of his own voice confirmed, he leaps upon the ground.

Long, strict, and tender was the embrace  
he gave,

Feebly returned by daunted Artegal;  
Whose natural affection doubts enslave,  
And apprehensions dark and criminal.

Loth to restrain the moving interview,  
The attendant lords withdrew;  
And, while they stood upon the plain apart,  
Thus Elidure, by words, relieved his struggling heart.

"By heavenly Powers conducted, we have met;

—O Brother! to my knowledge lost so long,

But neither lost to love, nor to regret,  
Nor to my wishes lost;—forgive the wrong,  
(Such it may seem) if I thy crown have borne,

Thy royal mantle worn:  
I was their natural guardian; and 'tis just  
That now I should restore what hath been held in trust."

A while the astonished Artegal stood mute,  
Then thus exclaimed: "To me, of titles shorn,

And stripped of power! me, feeble, destitute,

To me a kingdom! spare the bitter scorn:  
If justice ruled the breast of foreign kings,

Then, on the wide-spread wings  
Of war, had I returned to claim my right;  
This will I here avow, not dreading thy despite."

"I do not blame thee," Elidure replied;

"But, if my looks did with my words agree,

I should at once be trusted, not defied,  
And thou from all disquietude be free.  
May the unsullied Goddess of the chase,  
Who to this blessed place  
At this blest moment led me, if I speak  
With insincere intent, on me her vengeance wreak!

"Were this same spear, which in my hand  
I grasp.

The British sceptre, here would I to thee  
The symbol yield; and would undo this clasp,

If it confined the robe of sovereignty.  
Odious to me the pomp of regal court,  
And joyless sylvan sport,

While thou art roving, wretched and forlorn,

Thy couch the dewy earth, thy roof the forest thorn!"

Then Artegal thus spake: "I only sought,  
Within this realm a place of safe retreat;  
Beware of rousing an ambitious thought;  
Beware of kindling hopes, for me unmeet!  
Thou art reputed wise, but in my mind  
Art pitifully blind:

Full soon this generous purpose thou may'st rue,

When that which has been done no wishes can undo.

"Who, when a crown is fixed upon his head,  
Would balance claim with claim, and right with right?

But thou—I know not how inspired, how led—

Wouldst change the course of things in all men's sight!

And this for one who cannot imitate  
Thy virtue, who may hate:

For, if, by such strange sacrifice restored,  
He reign, thou still must be his king, and sovereign lord;

"Lifted in magnanimity above  
Aught that my feeble nature could perform,  
Or even conceive; surpassing me in love  
Far as in power the eagle doth the worm.  
I, Brother! only should be king in name,  
And govern to my shame;

A shadow in a hated land, while all  
Of glad or willing service to thy share would fall."

"Believe it not," said Elidure; "respect  
Awaits on virtuous life, and ever most  
Attends on goodness with dominion decked,  
Which stands the universal empire's boast;  
This can thy own experience testify:

Nor shall thy foes deny  
That, in the gracious opening of thy reign,  
Our father's spirit seemed in thee to breathe  
again.

"And what if o'er thy bright unbosoming  
Clouds of disgrace and envious fortune  
past!

Have we not seen the glories of the spring  
By veil of noontide darkness overcast?  
The frith that glittered like a warrior's  
shield,

The sky, the gay green field,  
Are vanished; gladness ceases in the  
groves,  
And trepidation strikes the blackened  
mountain-coves.

"But is that gloom dissolved? how passing  
clear  
Seems the wide world, far brighter than  
before!

Even so thy latent worth will re-appear,  
Gladdening the people's heart from shore  
to shore;

For youthful faults ripe virtues shall atone;  
Re-seated on thy throne,  
Proof shalt thou furnish that misfortune,  
pain,

And sorrow, have confirmed thy native  
right to reign.

"But, not to overlook what thou may'st  
know,

Thy enemies are neither weak nor few;  
And circumspect must be our course, and  
slow,

Or from my purpose ruin may ensue.  
Dismiss thy followers;—let them calmly  
wait

Such change in thy estate  
As I already have in thought devised;  
And which, with caution due, may soon  
be realised."

The Story tells what courses were pursued,  
Until king Elidure, with full consent  
Of all his peers, before the multitude,  
Rose,—and, to consummate this just  
intent,

Did place upon his brother's head the crown,  
Relinquished by his own;  
Then to his people cried, "Receive your  
lord,  
Gorbonian's first-born son, your rightful  
king restored!"

The people answered with a loud acclaim:  
Yet more;—heart-smitten by the heroic  
deed,

The reinstated Artegal became  
Earth's noblest penitent; from bondage  
freed

Of vice—thenceforth unable to subvert  
Or shake his high desert.

Long did he reign; and, when he died,  
the tear  
Of universal grief bedewed his honoured bier.

Thus was a Brother by a Brother saved;  
With whom a crown (temptation that hath  
set

Discord in hearts of men till they have  
braved

Their nearest kin with deadly purpose met)  
'Gainst duty weighed, and faithful love,  
did seem

A thing of no esteem;  
And, from this triumph of affection pure,  
He bore the lasting name of "pious  
Elidure." 1815.

## SEPTEMBER 1815

"For me who under kindlier laws." This conclusion has more than once, to my great regret, excited painfully sad feelings in the hearts of young persons fond of poetry and poetic composition, by contrast of their feeble and declining health with that state of robust constitution which prompted me to rejoice in a season of frost and snow as more favourable to the Muses than summer itself.

WHILE not a leaf seems faded; while the  
fields,

With ripening harvest prodigally fair,  
In brightest sunshine bask; this nipping air,  
Sent from some distant clime where Winter  
wields

His icy scimitar, a foretaste yields  
Of bitter change, and bids the flowers  
beware;

And whispers to the silent birds, "Prepare  
Against the threatening foe your trustiest  
shields."

For me, who under kindlier laws belong  
 To Nature's tuneful quire, this rustling dry  
 Through leaves yet green, and yon crystal-  
 line sky,  
 Announce a season potent to renew,  
 'Mid frost and snow, the instinctive joys of  
 song,  
 And nobler cares than listless summer knew.

## NOVEMBER 1

Suggested on the banks of the Brathay by the  
 sight of Langdale Pikes. It is delightful to re-  
 member these moments of far-distant days, which  
 probably would have been forgotten if the im-  
 pression had not been transferred to verse. The  
 same observation applies to the next.

How clear, how keen, how marvellously  
 bright  
 The effluence from yon distant mountain's  
 head,  
 Which, strewn with snow smooth as the  
 sky can shed,  
 Shines like another sun—on mortal sight  
 Uprisen, as if to check approaching Night,  
 And all her twinkling stars. Who now  
 would tread,  
 If so he might, yon mountain's glittering  
 head—  
 Terrestrial, but a surface, by the flight  
 Of sad mortality's earth-sullying wing,  
 Unswept, unstained? Nor shall the ærial  
 Powers  
 Dissolve that beauty, destined to endure,  
 White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely pure,  
 Through all vicissitudes, till genial Spring  
 Has filled the laughing vales with welcome  
 flowers. 1815.

"THE FAIREST, BRIGHTEST, HUES  
OF ETHER FADE"<sup>1</sup>

Suggested at Hacket, which is on the craggy  
 ridge that rises between the two Langdales and  
 looks towards Windermere. The Cottage of  
 Hacket was often visited by us, and at the time  
 when this Sonnet was written, and long after,  
 was occupied by the husband and wife described  
 in the "Excursion," where it is mentioned that  
 she was in the habit of walking in the front of the  
 dwelling with a light to guide her husband home  
 at night. The same cottage is alluded to in the

<sup>1</sup> This and the following eight sonnets between  
 the years 1810-15.

"Epistle to Sir George Beaumont" as that from  
 which the female peasant hailed us on our morning  
 journey. The musician mentioned in the Sonnet  
 was the Rev. Samuel Tillbrook of Peter-house,  
 Cambridge, who remodelled the Ivy Cottage at  
 Rydal after he had purchased it.

THE fairest, brightest, hues of ether fade;  
 The sweetest notes must terminate and die;  
 O Friend! thy flute has breathed a harmony  
 Softly resounded through this rocky glade;  
 Such strains of rapture as<sup>2</sup> the Genius  
 played

In his still haunt on Bagdad's summit high;  
 He who stood visible to Mirza's eye,  
 Never before to human sight betrayed.  
 Lo, in the vale, the mists of evening spread!  
 The visionary Arches are not there,  
 Nor the green Islands, nor the shining Seas:  
 Yet sacred is to me this Mountain's head,  
 Whence I have risen, uplifted, on the breeze  
 Of harmony, above all earthly care.

"WEAK IS THE WILL OF MAN,  
HIS JUDGMENT BLIND"

'WEAK is the will of Man, his judgment  
 blind;  
 'Remembrance persecutes, and Hope be-  
 trays;  
 'Heavy is woe;—and joy, for human-kind,  
 'A mournful thing, so transient is the  
 blaze!'

Thus might ~~he~~ paint our lot of mortal days  
 Who wants the glorious faculty assigned  
 To elevate the more-than-reasoning Mind,  
 And colour life's dark cloud with orient rays.  
 Imagination is that sacred power,  
 Imagination lofty and refined;  
 'Tis hers to pluck the amaranthine flower  
 Of Faith, and round the Sufferer's temples  
 bind  
 Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest  
 shower,  
 And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest  
 wind.

"HAIL, TWILIGHT, SOVEREIGN  
OF ONE PEACEFUL HOUR"

HAIL, Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful  
 hour!

Not dull art Thou as undiscerning Night;

<sup>2</sup> See the Vision of Mirza in the *Spectator*.

But studious only to remove from sight  
Day's mutable distinctions. — Ancient  
Power !

Thus did the waters gleam, the mountains  
lower,

To the rude Briton, when, in wolf-skin vest  
Here roving wild, he laid him down to rest  
On the bare rock, or through a leafy bower  
Looked ere his eyes were closed. By him  
was seen

The self-same Vision which we now behold,  
At thy meek bidding, shadowy Power !  
brought forth

These mighty barriers, and the gulf be-  
tween ;

The flood, the stars,—a spectacle as old  
As the beginning of the heavens and earth !

### "THE SHEPHERD, LOOKING EASTWARD, SOFTLY SAID"

THE Shepherd, looking eastward, softly said,  
"Bright is thy veil, O Moon, as thou art  
bright !"

Forthwith, that little cloud, in ether spread  
And penetrated all with tender light,  
She cast away, and showed her fulgent head  
Uncovered ; dazzling the Beholder's sight  
As if to vindicate her beauty's right  
Her beauty thoughtlessly disparaged.  
Meanwhile that veil, removed or thrown  
aside,

Went floating from her, darkening as it  
went ;

And a huge mass, to bury or to hide,  
Approached this glory of the firmament ;  
Who meekly yields, and is obscured—con-  
tent

With one calm triumph of a modest pride.

### "EVEN AS A DRAGON'S EYE THAT FEELS THE STRESS"

EVEN as a dragon's eye that feels the stress  
Of a bedimmed sleep, or as a lamp  
Suddenly glaring through sepulchral damp,  
So burns yon Taper 'mid a black recess  
Of mountains, silent, dreary, motionless :  
The lake below reflects it not ; the sky,  
Muffled in clouds, affords no company  
To mitigate and cheer its loneliness.  
Yet, round the body of that joyless Thing

Which sends so far its melancholy light,  
Perhaps are seated in domestic ring  
A gay society with faces bright,  
Conversing, reading, laughing ;—or they  
sing,

While hearts and voices in the song unite.

### "MARK THE CONCENTRED HAZELS THAT ENCLOSE"

Suggested in the wild hazel wood at the foot of  
Helm-crag, where the stone still lies, with others  
of like form and character, though much of the  
wood that veiled it from the glare of day has been  
felled. This beautiful ground was lately purchased  
by our friend Mrs. Fletcher, the ancient owners,  
most respected persons, being obliged to part with  
it in consequence of the imprudence of a son. It  
is gratifying to mention that, instead of murmur-  
ing and repining at this change of fortune, they  
offered their services to Mrs. Fletcher, the husband  
as an out-door labourer, and the wife as a domestic  
servant. I have witnessed the pride and pleasure  
with which the man worked at improvements of  
the ground round the house. Indeed he expressed  
those feelings to me himself, and the countenance  
and manner of his wife always denoted feelings of  
the same character. I believe a similar disposi-  
tion to contentment under change of fortune is  
common among the class to which these good  
people belong. Yet, in proof that to part with  
their patrimony is most painful to them, I may  
refer to those stanzas entitled "Repentance," no  
inconsiderable part of which was taken verbatim  
from the language of the speaker herself.

MARK the concentred hazels that enclose  
Yon old grey Stone, protected from the ray  
Of noontide suns :—and even the beams  
that play

And glance, while wantonly the rough  
wind blows,

Are seldom free to touch the moss that grows  
Upon that roof, amid embowering gloom,  
The very image framing of a Tomb,  
In which some ancient Chieftain finds re-  
pose

Among the lonely mountains.—Live, ye  
trees !

And thou, grey Stone, the pensive likeness  
keep

Of a dark chamber where the Mighty sleep :  
For more than Fancy to the influence bends  
When solitary Nature condescends  
To mimic Time's forlorn humanities.

## TO THE POET, JOHN DYER

BARD of the Fleece, whose skilful genius  
made  
That work a living landscape fair and  
bright ;  
Nor hallowed less with musical delight  
Than those soft scenes through which thy  
childhood strayed,  
Those southern tracts of Cambria, " deep  
embayed,  
With green hills fenced, with ocean's  
murmur lulled ; "  
Though hasty Fame hath many a chaplet  
culled  
For worthless brows, while in the pensive  
shade  
Of cold neglect she leaves thy head ungraced,  
Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts meek  
and still,  
A grateful few, shall love thy modest Lay,  
Long as the shepherd's bleating flock shall  
stray  
O'er naked Snowdon's wide ærial waste ;  
Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar  
Hill !

"BROOK ! WHOSE SOCIETY THE  
POET SEEKS"

BROOK ! whose society the Poet seeks,  
Intent his wasted spirits to renew ;  
And whom the curious Painter doth pursue  
Through rocky passes, among flowery  
creeks,  
And tracks thee dancing down thy water-  
breaks ;  
If wish were mine some type of thee to  
view,  
Thee, and not thee thyself, I would not do  
Like Grecian Artists, give thee human  
cheeks,  
Channels for tears ; no Naiad should'st  
thou be,—  
Have neither limbs, feet, feathers, joints  
nor hairs :  
It seems the Eternal Soul is clothed in thee  
With purer robes than those of flesh and  
blood,  
And hath bestowed on thee a safer good ;  
Unwearied joy, and life without its cares,

"SURPRISED BY JOY—IMPATIENT  
AS THE WIND"

This was in fact suggested by my daughter  
Catharine long after her death.

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the Wind  
I turned to share the transport—Oh ! with  
whom

But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,  
That spot which no vicissitude can find ?  
Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my  
mind—

But how could I forget thee ? Through  
what power,  
Even for the least division of an hour,  
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind  
To my most grievous loss ?—That thought's  
return

Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,  
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,  
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no  
more ;

That neither present time, nor years unborn  
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

## ODE

THE MORNING OF THE DAY APPOINTED  
FOR A GENERAL THANKSGIVING.  
JANUARY 18, 1816<sup>1</sup>

The first stanza of this Ode was composed  
almost extempore, in front of Rydal Mount,  
before church-time, and on such a morning and  
precisely with such objects before my eyes as are  
here described. The view taken of Napoleon's  
character and proceedings is little in accordance  
with that taken by some historians and critical  
philosophers. I am glad and proud of the differ-  
ence, and trust that this series of poems, infinitely  
below the subject as they are, will survive to  
counteract, in unsophisticated minds, the pernicious  
and degrading tendency of those views and  
doctrines that lead to the idolatry of power, as  
power, and, in that false splendour to lose sight  
of its real nature and constitution as it often acts  
for the gratification of its possessor without  
reference to a beneficial end—an infirmity that  
has characterised men of all ages, classes, and  
employments, since Nimrod became a mighty  
hunter before the Lord.

## I

HAIL, orient Conqueror of gloomy Night !  
Thou that canst shed the bliss of gratitude

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

On hearts howe'er insensible or rude;  
Whether thy punctual visitations smite  
The haughty towers where monarchs dwell;  
Or thou, impartial Sun, with presence bright  
Cheer'st the low threshold of the peasant's  
cell!

Not unrejoiced I see thee climb the sky  
In naked splendour, clear from mist or  
haze,

Or cloud approaching to divert the rays,  
Which even in deepest winter testify

Thy power and majesty,  
Dazzling the vision that presumes to gaze.  
—Well does thine aspect usher in this Day;  
As aptly suits therewith that modest pace  
Submitted to the chains

That bind thee to the path which God  
ordains

That thou shalt trace,  
Till, with the heavens and earth, thou pass  
away!

Nor less, the stillness of these frosty plains,  
Their utter stillness, and the silent grace  
Of yon ethereal summits white with snow,  
(Whose tranquil pomp and spotless purity  
Report of storms gone by  
To us who tread below)

Do with the service of this Day accord.  
—Divinest Object which the uplifted eye  
Of mortal man is suffered to behold;  
Thou, who upon those snow-clad Heights  
has poured

Meek lustre, nor forget'st the humble Vale;  
Thou who dost warm Earth's universal  
mould,

And for thy bounty wert not unadored  
By pious men of old;

Once more, heart-cheering Sun, I bid thee  
hail!

Bright be thy course to-day, let not this  
promise fail!

## II

'Mid the deep quiet of this morning hour,  
All nature seems to hear me while I speak,  
By feelings urged that do not vainly seek  
Apt language, ready as the tuneful notes  
That stream in blithe succession from the  
throats

Of birds, in leafy bower,  
Warbling a farewell to a vernal shower.  
—There is a radiant though a short-lived  
flame,

That burns for Poets in the dawning east;  
And oft my soul hath kindled at the same,  
When the captivity of sleep had ceased;  
But He who fixed immoveably the frame  
Of the round world, and built, by laws as  
strong,

A solid refuge for distress—

The towers of righteousness;  
He knows that from a holier altar came  
The quickening spark of this day's sacrifice;  
Knows that the source is nobler whence  
doth rise

The current of this matin song;  
That deeper far it lies  
Than aught dependent on the fickle skies.

## III

Have we not conquered?—by the venge-  
ful sword?

Ah no, by dint of Magnanimity;  
That curbed the baser passions, and left free  
A loyal band to follow their liege Lord  
Clear-sighted Honour, and his staid Com-  
peers,

Along a track of most unnatural years;  
In execution of heroic deeds  
Whose memory, spotless as the crystal  
beads

Of morning dew upon the untrodden meads,  
Shall live enrolled above the starry spheres.  
He, who in concert with an earthly string  
Of Britain's acts would sing,

He with enraptured voice will tell  
Of One whose spirit no reverse could quell;  
Of One that 'mid the failing never failed—  
Who paints how Britain struggled and  
prevailed

Shall represent her labouring with an eye  
Of circumspect humanity;  
Shall show her clothed with strength and  
skill,

All martial duties to fulfil;  
Firm as a rock in stationary fight;  
In motion rapid as the lightning's gleam;  
Fierce as a flood-gate bursting at midnight  
To rouse the wicked from their giddy  
dream—

Woe, woe to all that face her in the field!  
Appalled she may not be, and cannot yield.

## IV

And thus is *missed* the sole true glory  
That can belong to human story!



At which they only shall arrive  
 Who through the abyss of weakness dive.  
 The very humblest are too proud of heart;  
 And one brief day is rightly set apart  
 For Him who lifteth up and layeth low;  
 For that Almighty God to whom we owe,  
 Say not that we have vanquished—but that  
 we survive.

## V

How dreadful the dominion of the impure !  
 Why should the Song be tardy to proclaim  
 That less than power unbounded could not tame  
 That soul of Evil—which, from hell let loose,  
 Had filled the astonished world with such abuse  
 As boundless patience only could endure?  
 —Wide-wasted regions—cities wrapt in flame—  
 Who sees, may lift a streaming eye  
 To Heaven;—who never saw, may heave a sigh;  
 But the foundation of our nature shakes,  
 And with an infinite pain the spirit aches,  
 When desolated countries, towns on fire,  
 Are but the avowed attire  
 Of warfare waged with desperate mind  
 Against the life of virtue in mankind;  
 Assaulting without ruth  
 The citadels of truth;  
 While the fair gardens of civility,  
 By ignorance defaced,  
 By violence laid waste,  
 Perish without reprieve for flower or tree !

## VI

A crouching purpose—a distracted will—  
 Opposed to hopes that batten upon scorn,  
 And to desires whose ever-waxing horn  
 Not all the light of earthly power could fill;  
 Opposed to dark, deep plots of patient skill,  
 And to celerities of lawless force;  
 Which, spurning God, had flung away remorse—  
 What could they gain but shadows of redress?  
 —So had proceeded propagating worse;  
 And discipline was passion's dire excess.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Widens the fatal web, its lines extend,  
 And deadlier poisons in the chalice blend.  
 When will your trials teach you to be wise?  
 —O prostrate Lands, consult your agonies !

## VII

No more—the guilt is banished,  
 And, with the guilt, the shame is fled;  
 And, with the guilt and shame, the Woe  
 hath vanished,  
 Shaking the dust and ashes from her head !  
 —No more—these lingerings of distress  
 Sully the limpid stream of thankfulness.  
 What robe can Gratitude employ  
 So seemly as the radiant vest of Joy?  
 What steps so suitable as those that move  
 In prompt obedience to spontaneous measures  
 Of glory, and felicity, and love,  
 Surrendering the whole heart to sacred pleasures?

## VIII

O Britain ! dearer far than life is dear,  
 If one there be  
 Of all thy progeny  
 Who can forget thy prowess, never more  
 Be that ungrateful Son allowed to hear  
 Thy green leaves rustle or thy torrents roar.  
 As springs the lion from his den,  
 As from a forest-brake  
 Upstarts a glistening snake,  
 The bold Arch-despot re-appeared;—again  
 Wide Europe heaves, impatient to be cast,  
 With all her armed Powers,  
 On that offensive soil, like waves upon  
 a thousand shores.  
 The trumpet blew a universal blast !  
 But Thou art foremost in the field;—there  
 stand :  
 Receive the triumph destined to thy hand !  
 All States have glorified themselves;—their  
 claims  
 Are weighed by Providence, in balance even;  
 And now, in preference to the mightiest  
 names,  
 To Thee the exterminating sword is given.  
 Dread mark of approbation, justly gained !  
 Exalted office, worthily sustained !

## IX

Preserve, O Lord ! within our hearts  
 The memory of thy favour,

That else insensibly departs,  
And loses its sweet savour !  
Lodge it within us !—as the power of light  
Lives inexhaustibly in precious gems,  
Fixed on the front of Eastern diadems,  
So shine our thankfulness for ever bright !  
What offering, what transcendent monument  
Shall our sincerity to Thee present ?  
—Not work of hands ; but trophies that  
may reach

To highest Heaven—the labour of the Soul ;  
That builds, as thy unerring precepts teach,  
Upon the internal conquests made by each,  
Her hope of lasting glory for the whole.  
Yet will not heaven disown nor earth gainsay  
The outward service of this day ;  
Whether the worshippers entreat  
Forgiveness from God's mercy-seat ;  
Or thanks and praises to His throne ascend  
That He has brought our warfare to an end,  
And that we need no second victory !—  
Ha ! what a ghastly sight for man to see ;  
And to the heavenly saints in peace who  
dwell,

For a brief moment, terrible ;  
But, to thy sovereign penetration, fair,  
Before whom all things are, that were,  
All judgments that have been, ore'er shall be ;  
Links in the chain of thy tranquillity !  
Along the bosom of this favoured Nation,  
Breathe Thou, this day, a vital undulation !

Let all who do this land inherit  
Be conscious of thy moving spirit !  
Oh, 'tis a goodly Ordinance,—the sight,  
Though sprung from bleeding war, is one  
of pure delight ;

Bless Thou the hour, or ere the hour arrive,  
When a whole people shall kneel down in  
prayer,

And, at one moment, in one rapture, strive  
With lip and heart to tell their gratitude

For thy protecting care,  
Their solemn joy—praising the Eternal  
Lord

For tyranny subdued,  
And for the sway of equity renewed,  
For liberty confirmed, and peace restored !

## X

But hark—the summons !—down the  
placid lake  
Floats the soft cadence of the church-tower  
bells ;

Bright shines the Sun, as if his beams  
would wake

The tender insects sleeping in their cells ;  
Bright shines the Sun—and not a breeze to  
shake

The drops that tip the melting icicles.

*O, enter now his temple gate !*

Inviting words—perchance already flung  
(As the crowd press devoutly down the aisle  
Of some old Minster's venerable pile)

From voices into zealous passion stung,  
While the tubed engine feels the inspiring  
blast,

And has begun—its clouds of sound to cast  
Forth towards empyreal Heaven,  
As if the fretted roof were riven.

*Us*, humbler ceremonies now await ;  
But in the bosom, with devout respect  
The banner of our joy we will erect,  
And strength of love our souls shall elevate :  
For to a few collected in his name,  
Their heavenly Father will incline an ear  
Gracious to service hallowed by its aim ;—  
Awake ! the majesty of God reverse !

Go—and with foreheads meekly bowed  
Present your prayers—go—and rejoice  
aloud—

The Holy One will hear !  
And what, 'mid silence deep, with faith  
sincere,

Ye, in your low and undisturbed estate,  
Shall simply feel and purely meditate—  
Of warnings—from the unprecedented  
might,

Which, in our time, the impious have dis-  
closed ;

And of more arduous duties thence imposed  
Upon the future advocates of right ;

Of mysteries revealed,  
And judgments unrepealed,  
Of earthly revolution,  
And final retribution,—

To his omniscience will appear  
An offering not unworthy to find place,  
On this high DAY of THANKS, before the  
Throne of Grace !

## ODE

## I

IMAGINATION—ne'er before content,  
But aye ascending, restless in her pride

From all that martial feats could yield  
To her desires, or to her hopes present—  
Stooped to the Victory, on that Belgic field,  
Achieved, this closing deed magnificent,

And with the embrace was satisfied.

—Fly, ministers of Fame,

With every help that ye from earth and  
heaven may claim!

Bear through the world these tidings of  
delight!

—Hours, Days, and Months, *have* borne  
them in the sight

Of mortals, hurrying like a sudden shower  
That landward stretches from the sea,

The morning's splendours to devour;

But this swift travel scorns the company  
Of irksome change, or threats from sadden-  
ing power.

—*The shock is given—the Adversaries  
bleed—*

*Lo, Justice triumphs! Earth is freed!*  
Joyful annunciation!—it went forth—  
It pierced the caverns of the sluggish  
North—

It found no barrier on the ridge  
Of Andes—frozen gulphs became its  
bridge—

The vast Pacific gladdens with the freight—  
Upon the Lakes of Asia 'tis bestowed—

The Arabian desert shapes a willing road

Across her burning breast,

For this refreshing incense from the West!—

—Where snakes and lions breed,  
Where towns and cities thick as stars  
appear,

Wherever fruits are gathered, and where'er  
The upturned soil receives the hopeful  
seed—

While the Sun rules, and cross the shades  
of night—

The unwearied arrow hath pursued its  
flight!

The eyes of good men thankfully give heed,  
And in its sparkling progress read

Of virtue crowned with glory's deathless  
meed:

Tyrants exult to hear of kingdoms won,  
And slaves are pleased to learn that mighty  
feats are done;

Even the proud Realm, from whose dis-  
tracted borders

This messenger of good was launched in air,  
France, humbled France, amid her wild  
disorders,

Feels, and hereafter shall the truth declare,  
That she too lacks not reason to rejoice,  
And utter England's name with sadly-  
plausible voice.

## II

O genuine glory, pure renown!

And well might it beseem that mighty  
Town

Into whose bosom earth's best treasures  
flow,

To whom all persecuted men retreat;

If a new Temple lift her votive brow

High on the shore of silver Thames—to  
greet

The peaceful guest advancing from afar.

Bright be the Fabric, as a star

Fresh risen, and beautiful within!—there  
meet

Dependence infinite, proportion just;

A Pile that Grace approves, and Time can  
trust

With his most sacred wealth, heroic dust.

## III

But if the valiant of this land

In reverential modesty demand,

That all observance, due to them, be paid

Where their serene progenitors are laid;

Kings, warriors, high-souled poets, saint-  
like sages,

England's illustrious sons of long, long  
ages;

Be it not unordained that solemn rites,

Within the circuit of those Gothic walls,

Shall be performed at pregnant intervals;

Commemoration holy that unites

The living generations with the dead;

By the deep soul-moving sense

Of religious eloquence,—

By visual pomp, and by the tie

Of sweet and threatening harmony;

Soft notes, awful as the omen

Of destructive tempests coming,

And escaping from that sadness

Into elevated gladness;

While the white-robed choir attend-  
ant,

Under mouldering banners pendant,

Provoke all potent symphonies to raise

Songs of victory and praise,

For them who bravely stood unhurt, or  
bled

With medicable wounds, or found their  
graves  
Upon the battle field, or under ocean's waves;  
Or were conducted home in single state,  
And long procession—there to lie,  
Where their sons' sons, and all posterity,  
Unheard by them, their deeds shall celebrate!

IV

Nor will the God of peace and love  
Such martial service disapprove.  
He guides the Pestilence—the cloud  
Of locusts travels on his breath;  
The region that in hope was  
ploughed  
His drought consumes, his mildew taints  
with death;

He springs the hushed Volcano's  
mine,

He puts the Earthquake on her still design,  
Darkens the sun, hath bade the forest sink,  
And, drinking towns and cities, still can  
drink

Cities and towns—'tis Thou—the work is  
Thine!—

The fierce Tornado sleeps within thy  
courts—

He hears the word—he flies—

And navies perish in their ports;

For Thou art angry with thine enemies!

For these, and mourning for our  
errors,

And sins, that point their terrors,

We bow our heads before Thee, and we  
laud

And magnify thy name, Almighty God!

But Man is thy most awful instru-  
ment,

In working out a pure intent;

Thou cloth'st the wicked in their dazzling  
mail,

And for thy righteous purpose they prevail;  
Thine arm from peril guards the  
coasts

Of them who in thy laws delight:

Thy presence turns the scale of doubtful  
fight,

Tremendous God of battles, Lord of  
Hosts!

V

Forbear:—to Thee—

Father and Judge of all, with fervent tongue

But in a gentler strain  
Of contemplation, by no sense of wrong.  
(Too quick and keen) incited to disdain  
Of pity pleading from the heart in vain—  
TO THEE—TO THEE—  
Just God of christianised Humanity  
Shall praises be poured forth, and thanks  
ascend,  
That thou hast brought our warfare to an  
end,  
And that we need no second victory!  
Blest, above measure blest,  
If on thy love our Land her hopes shall  
rest,  
And all the Nations labour to fulfil  
Thy law, and live henceforth in peace, in  
pure good will. 1816.

INVOCATION TO THE EARTH

FEBRUARY 1816

Composed immediately after the "Thanksgiv-  
ing Ode," to which it may be considered as a  
second part.

I

"REST, rest, perturbed Earth!  
O rest, thou doleful Mother of Man-  
kind!"

A Spirit sang in tones more plaintive than  
the wind:

"From regions where no evil thing has  
birth

I come—thy stains to wash away,  
Thy cherished fetters to unbind,  
And open thy sad eyes upon a milder  
day.

The Heavens are thronged with martyrs  
that have risen

From out thy noisome prison;

The penal caverns groan

With tens of thousands rent from off the  
tree

Of hopeful life,—by battle's whirlwind blown  
Into the deserts of Eternity.

Unpitied havoc! Victims unlamented!

But not on high, where madness is resented,  
And murder causes some sad tears to  
flow,

Though, from the widely-sweeping blow,  
The choirs of Angels spread, triumphantly  
augmented.

## II

"False Parent of Mankind!  
Obdurate, proud, and blind,  
I sprinkle thee with soft celestial dews,  
Thy lost, maternal heart to re-infuse!  
Scattering this far-fetched moisture from  
my wings,  
Upon the act a blessing I implore,  
Of which the rivers in their secret springs,  
The rivers stained so oft with human gore,  
Are conscious;—may the like return no  
more!

May Discord—for a Seraph's care  
Shall be attended with a bolder prayer—  
May she, who once disturbed the seats of  
bliss

These mortal spheres above,  
Be chained for ever to the black abyss.  
And thou, O rescued Earth, by peace and  
love,

And merciful desires, thy sanctity approve!"

The Spirit ended his mysterious rite,  
And the pure vision closed in darkness  
infinite.

## ODE

————— *Carmina possumus*  
*Donare, et pretium dicere muneris.*  
*Non incisa notis marmora publicis,*  
*Per quæ spiritus et vita redit bonis*  
*Post mortem ducibus*

————— *clarius indicant*  
*Laudes, quam ——— Pierides; neque,*  
*Si chartæ sileant quod bene feceris,*  
*Mercedem tuleris. —HOR. Car. 8, Lib. 4.*

## I

WHEN the soft hand of sleep had closed  
the latch

On the tired household of corporeal sense,  
And Fancy, keeping unreluctant watch,  
Was free her choicest favours to dispense;  
I saw, in wondrous perspective displayed,  
A landscape more august than happiest  
skill

Of pencil ever clothed with light and shade;  
An intermingled pomp of vale and hill,  
City, and naval stream, suburban grove,  
And stately forest where the wild deer  
rove;

Nor wanted lurking hamlet, dusky towns,

And scattered rural farms of aspect bright;  
And, here and there, between the pastoral  
downs,

The azure sea upswelled upon the sight.  
Fair prospect, such as Britain only shows!  
But not a living creature could be seen  
Through its wide circuit, that, in deep  
repose,

And, even to sadness, lonely and serene,  
Lay hushed; till—through a portal in the  
sky

Brighter than brightest loop-hole, in a  
storm,

Opening before the sun's triumphant eye—  
Issued, to sudden view, a glorious Form!  
Earthward it glided with a swift descent:  
Saint George himself this Visitant must  
be;

And, ere a thought could ask on what  
intent

He sought the regions of Humanity,  
A thrilling voice was heard, that vivified  
City and field and flood;—aloud it cried—

"Though from my celestial home,

"Like a Champion, armed I come;

"On my helm the dragon crest,

"And the red cross on my breast;

"I, the Guardian of this Land,

"Speak not now of toilsome duty;

"Well obeyed was that command—

"Whence bright days of festive beauty;

"Haste, Virgins, haste!—the flowers which  
summer gave

"Have perished in the field;

"But the green thickets plenteously shall  
yield

"Fit garlands for the brave,

"That will be welcome, if by you entwined;

"Haste, Virgins, haste; and you, ye  
Matrons grave,

"Go forth with rival youthfulness of mind,

"And gather what ye find

"Of hardy laurel and wild holly boughs—

"To deck your stern Defenders' modest  
brows!

"Such simple gifts prepare,

"Though they have gained a worthier  
need;

"And in due time shall share

"Those palms and amaranthine wreaths

"Unto their martyred Countrymen decreed,

"In realms where everlasting freshness  
breathes!"

## II

And lo! with crimson banners proudly  
streaming,  
And upright weapons innocently gleaming,  
Along the surface of a spacious plain  
Advance in order the redoubted Bands,  
And there receive green chaplets from the  
hands  
Of a fair female train—  
Maids and Matrons, dight  
In robes of dazzling white;  
While from the crowd bursts forth a raptur-  
ous noise  
By the cloud-capt hills retorted;  
And a throng of rosy boys  
In loose fashion tell their joys;  
And grey-haired sires, on staffs supported,  
Look round, and by their smiling seem to  
say,  
Thus strives a grateful Country to display  
The mighty debt which nothing can repay!

## III

Anon before my sight a palace rose  
Built of all precious substances,—so pure  
And exquisite, that sleep alone bestows  
Ability like splendour to endure:  
Entered, with streaming thousands, through  
the gate,  
I saw the banquet spread beneath a Dome  
of state,  
A lofty Dome, that dared to emulate  
The heaven of sable night  
With starry lustre; yet had power to throw  
Solemn effulgence, clear as solar light,  
Upon a princely company below,  
While the vault rang with choral harmony,  
Like some Nymph-haunted grot beneath  
the roaring sea.  
—No sooner ceased that peal, than on the  
verge  
Of exultation hung a dirge  
Breathed from a soft and lonely instrument,  
That kindled recollections  
Of agonised affections;  
And, though some tears the strain attended,  
The mournful passion ended  
In peace of spirit, and sublime content!

## IV

But garlands wither; festal shows depart,  
Like dreams themselves; and sweetest  
sound—

(Albeit of effect profound)

It was—and it is gone!

Victorious England! bid the silent Art  
Reflect, in glowing hues that shall not fade,  
Those high achievements; even as she  
arrayed  
With second life the deed of Marathon  
Upon Athenian walls;  
So may she labour for thy civic halls:  
And be the guardian spaces  
Of consecrated places,  
As nobly graced by Sculpture's patient toil;  
And let imperishable Columns rise  
Fixed in the depths of this courageous soil;  
Expressive signals of a glorious strife,  
And competent to shed a spark divine  
Into the torpid breast of daily life;—  
Records on which, for pleasure of all eyes,  
The morning sun may shine  
With gratulation thoroughly benign!

## V

And ye, Pierian Sisters, sprung from Jove  
And sage Mnemosyne,—full long debarred  
From your first mansions, exiled all too long  
From many a hallowed stream and grove,  
Dear native regions where ye wont to rove,  
Chanting for patriot heroes the reward  
Of never-dying song!  
Now (for, though Truth descending from  
above  
The Olympian summit hath destroyed for  
aye  
Your kindred Deities, Ye live and move,  
Spared for obeisance from perpetual love  
For privilege redeemed of godlike sway)  
Now, on the margin of some spotless  
fountain,  
Or top serene of unmolested mountain,  
Strike audibly the noblest of your lyres,  
And for a moment meet the soul's desires!  
That I, or some more favoured Bard, may  
hear  
What ye, celestial Maids! have often sung  
Of Britain's acts,—may catch it with rapt  
ear,  
And give the treasure to our British tongue!  
So shall the characters of that proud page  
Support their mighty theme from age to  
age;  
And, in the desert places of the earth,  
When they to future empires have given  
birth,

So shall the people gather and believe  
The bold report, transferred to every clime;  
And the whole world, not envious but ad-  
miring,

And to the like aspiring,  
Own—that the progeny of this fair Isle  
Had power as lofty actions to achieve  
As were performed in man's heroic prime;  
Nor wanted, when their fortitude had held  
Its even tenor, and the foe was quelled,  
A corresponding virtue to beguile  
The hostile purpose of wide-wasting Time—  
That not in vain they laboured to secure,  
For their great deeds, perpetual memory,  
And fame as largely spread as land and sea,  
By Works of spirit high and passion pure!

1816.

## ODE

## I

WHO rises on the banks of Seine,  
And binds her temples with the civic wreath?  
What joy to read the promise of her mien!  
How sweet to rest her wide-spread wings  
beneath

But they are ever playing,  
And twinkling in the light,  
And, if a breeze be straying,  
That breeze she will invite;

And stands on tiptoe, conscious she is fair,  
And calls a look of love into her face,  
And spreads her arms, as if the general air  
Alone could satisfy her wide embrace.

—Melt, Principalities, before her melt!  
Her love ye hailed—her wrath have felt!  
But She through many a change of form  
hath gone,

And stands amidst you now an armed  
creature,

Whose panoply is not a thing put on,  
But the live scales of a portentous nature;  
That, having forced its way from birth to  
birth,

Stalks round—abhorred by Heaven, a  
terror to the Earth!

## II

I marked the breathings of her dragon  
crest;

My Soul, a sorrowful interpreter,  
In many a midnight vision bowed  
Before the ominous aspect of her spear;

Whether the mighty beam, in scorn upheld,  
Threatened her foes,—or, pompously at  
rest,

Seemed to bisect her orbèd shield,  
As stretches a blue bar of solid cloud  
Across the setting sun and all the fiery west.

## III

So did she daunt the Earth, and God  
defy!

And, wheresoe'er she spread her sove-  
reignty,

Pollution tainted all that was most pure.

—Have we not known—and live we not to  
tell—

That Justice seemed to hear her final knell?  
Faith buried deeper in her own deep breast  
Her stores, and sighed to find them in-  
secure!

And Hope was maddened by the drops  
that fell

From shades, her chosen place of short-  
lived rest.

Shame followed shame, and woe supplanted  
woe—

Is this the only change that time can show?  
How long shall vengeance sleep? Ye patient  
Heavens, how long?

—Infirm ejaculation! from the tongue  
Of Nations wanting virtue to be strong  
Up to the measure of accorded might,  
And daring not to feel the majesty of right!

## IV

Weak Spirits are there—who would ask,  
Upon the pressure of a painful thing,  
The lion's sinews, or the eagle's wing;  
Or let their wishes loose, in forest-glade,

Among the lurking powers

Of herbs and lowly flowers,

Or seek, from saints above, miraculous  
aid—

That Man may be accomplished for a task  
Which his own nature hath enjoined;—  
and why?

If, when that interference hath relieved him,  
He must sink down to languish

In worse than former helplessness—and lie  
Till the caves roar,—and, imbe-  
cility

Again engendering anguish,

The same weak wish returns, that had  
Before deceived him.

## v

But Thou, supreme Disposer! may'st  
not speed  
The course of things, and change the creed  
Which hath been held aloft before men's  
sight  
Since the first framing of societies,  
Whether, as bards have told in ancient  
song,  
Built up by soft seducing harmonies;  
Or prest together by the appetite,  
And by the power, of wrong.  
1816.

## THE FRENCH ARMY IN RUSSIA

1812-13

HUMANITY, delighting to behold  
A fond reflection of her own decay,  
Hath painted Winter like a traveller old,  
Propped on a staff, and, through the sullen  
day,  
In hooded mantle, limping o'er the plain,  
As though his weakness were disturbed by  
pain:  
Or, if a juster fancy should allow  
An undisputed symbol of command,  
The chosen sceptre is a withered bough,  
Infirmlly grasped within a palsied hand.  
These emblems suit the helpless and for-  
lorn;  
But mighty Winter the device shall scorn.  
For he it was—dread Winter! who beset,  
Flinging round van and rear his ghastly net,  
That host, when from the regions of the  
Pole  
They shrank, insane ambition's barren  
goal—  
That host, as huge and strong as e'er defied  
Their God, and placed their trust in human  
pride!  
As fathers persecute rebellious sons,  
He smote the blossoms of their warrior  
youth;  
He called on Frost's inexorable tooth  
Life to consume in Manhood's firmest hold;  
Nor spared the reverend blood that feebly  
runs;  
For why—unless for liberty enrolled  
And sacred home—ah! why should hoary  
Age be bold?

Fleet the Tartar's reinless steed,  
But fleetier far the pinions of the Wind,  
Which from Siberian caves the Monarch  
freed,  
And sent him forth, with squadrons of his  
kind,  
And bade the Snow their ample backs be-  
stride,  
And to the battle ride.  
No pitying voice commands a halt,  
No courage can repel the dire assault;  
Distracted spiritless, benumbed, and blind,  
Whole legions sink—and, in one instant,  
find  
Burial and death: look for them—and  
descry,  
When morn returns, beneath the clear blue  
sky,  
A soundless waste, a trackless vacancy!  
1816.

## ON THE SAME OCCASION

YE Storms, resound the praises of your  
King!  
And ye mild Seasons—in a sunny clime,  
Midway on some high hill, while father  
Time  
Looks on delighted—meet in festal ring,  
And loud and long of Winter's triumph sing!  
Sing ye, with blossoms crowned, and fruits,  
and flowers,  
Of Winter's breath surcharged with sleety  
showers,  
And the dire flapping of his hoary wing!  
Knit the blithe dance upon the soft green  
grass;  
With feet, hands, eyes, looks, lips, report  
your gain;  
Whisper it to the billows of the main,  
And to the aerial zephyrs as they pass,  
That old decrepit Winter—*He* hath slain  
That Host, which rendered all your boun-  
ties vain!  
1816.

"BY MOSCOW SELF-DEVOTED TO  
A BLAZE"

By Moscow self-devoted to a blaze  
Of dreadful sacrifice; by Russian blood  
Lavished in fight with desperate hardihood;  
The unfeeling Elements no claim shall raise  
To rob our Human-nature of just praise



For what she did and suffered. Pledges  
 sure  
 Of a deliverance absolute and pure  
 She gave, if Faith might tread the beaten  
 ways  
 Of Providence. But now did the Most  
 High  
 Exalt his still small voice;—to quell that  
 Host  
 Gathered his power, a manifest ally;  
 He, whose heaped waves confounded the  
 proud boast  
 Of Pharaoh, said to Famine, Snow, and  
 Frost,  
 "Finish the strife by deadliest victory!"  
 1816.

#### THE GERMANS ON THE HEIGHTS OF HOCHHEIM

ABRUPTLY paused the strife;—the field  
 throughout  
 Resting upon his arms each warrior stood,  
 Checked in the very act and deed of blood,  
 With breath suspended, like a listening  
 scout.  
 O Silence! thou wert mother of a shout  
 That through the texture of yon azure dome  
 Cleaves its glad way, a cry of harvest home  
 Uttered to Heaven in ecstasy devout!  
 The barrier Rhine hath flashed, through  
 battle-smoke,  
 On men who gaze heart-smitten by the  
 view,  
 As if all Germany had felt the shock!  
 —Fly, wretched Gauls! ere they the charge  
 renew  
 Who have seen—themselves now casting  
 off the yoke—  
 The unconquerable Stream his course pur-  
 sue.<sup>1</sup> 1816.

#### SIEGE OF VIENNA RAISED BY JOHN SOBIESKI

FEBRUARY 1816

OH, for a kindling touch from that pure  
 flame  
 Which ministered, erewhile, to a sacrifice  
 Of gratitude, beneath Italian skies,  
 In words like these: 'Up, Voice of song!  
 proclaim

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

'Thy saintly rapture with celestial aim:  
 'For lo! the Imperial City stands released  
 'From bondage threatened by the embattled  
 East,  
 'And Christendom respires; from guilt and  
 shame  
 'Redeemed, from miserable fear set free  
 'By one day's feat, one mighty victory.  
 '—Chant the Deliverer's praise in every  
 tongue!  
 'The cross shall spread, the crescent hath  
 waxed dim;  
 'He conquering, as in joyful Heaven is  
 sung,  
 'HE CONQUERING THROUGH GOD, AND  
 GOD BY HIM.'<sup>1</sup>

#### OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO

(The last six lines intended for an Inscription.)

FEBRUARY 1816

INTREPID sons of Albion! not by you  
 Is life despised; ah no, the spacious earth  
 Ne'er saw a race who held, by right of  
 birth,  
 So many objects to which love is due:  
 Ye slight not life—to God and Nature true;  
 But death, becoming death, is dearer far,  
 When duty bids you bleed in open war:  
 Hence hath your prowess quelled that im-  
 pious crew.  
 Heroes!—for instant sacrifice prepared;  
 Yet filled with ardour and on triumph bent  
 'Mid direst shocks of mortal accident—  
 To you who fell, and you whom slaughter  
 spared  
 To guard the fallen, and consummate the  
 event,  
 Your Country rears this sacred Monument!

#### OCCASIONED BY THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO

FEBRUARY 1816

THE Bard—whose soul is meek as dawning  
 day,  
 Yet trained to judgments righteously severe,  
 Fervid, yet conversant with holy fear,

<sup>1</sup> See Filicaia's ode.

As recognising one Almighty sway:  
He—whose experienced eye can pierce the  
array

Of past events; to whom, in vision clear,  
The aspiring heads of future things appear,  
Like mountain-tops whose mists have rolled  
away—

Assailed from all encumbrance of our time,<sup>1</sup>  
He only, if such breathe, in strains devout  
Shall comprehend this victory sublime;  
Shall worthily rehearse the hideous rout,  
The triumph hail, which from their peace-  
ful clime

Angels might welcome with a choral shout!

### “EMPERORS AND KINGS, HOW OFT HAVE TEMPLES RUNG”

EMPERORS and Kings, how oft have temples  
rung

With impious thanksgiving, the Almighty's  
scorn!

How oft above their altars have been hung  
Trophies that led the good and wise to  
mourn

Triumphant wrong, battle of battle born,  
And sorrow that to fruitless sorrow clung!  
Now, from Heaven-sanctioned victory,  
Peace is sprung;

In this firm hour Salvation lifts her horn.  
Glory to arms! But, conscious that the  
nerve

Of popular reason, long mistrusted, freed  
Your thrones, ye Powers, from duty fear to  
swerve!

Be just, be grateful; nor, the oppressor's  
creed

Reviving, heavier chastisement deserve  
Than ever forced unpitied hearts to bleed.

1816.

### FEELINGS OF A FRENCH ROYAL- IST, ON THE DISINTERMENT OF THE REMAINS OF THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN

DEAR Reliques! from a pit of vilest mould  
Uprisen—to lodge among ancestral kings;  
And to inflict shame's salutary stings  
On the remorseless hearts of men grown old

1 “From all this world's encumbrance did him-  
self assoil.”—*Spenser*.

In a blind worship; men perversely bold  
Even to this hour,—yet, some shall now  
forsake

Their monstrous Idol if the dead e'er spake,  
To warn the living; if truth were ever told  
By aught redeemed out of the hollow grave:  
O murdered Prince! meek, loyal, pious,  
brave!

The power of retribution once was given:  
But 'tis a rueful thought that willow bands  
So often tie the thunder-wielding hands  
Of Justice sent to earth from highest  
Heaven! 1816.

### TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE FIRST BOOK OF THE ÆNEID

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PHILOLOGICAL  
MUSEUM

Your letter, reminding me of an expectation I  
some time since held out to you of allowing some  
specimens of my translation from the Æneid to be  
printed in the Philological Museum, was not very  
acceptable; for I had abandoned the thought of  
ever sending into the world any part of that ex-  
periment—for it was nothing more—an experiment  
begun for amusement, and I now think a less  
fortunate one than when I first named it to you.  
Having been displeased in modern translations  
with the additions of incongruous matter, I began  
to translate with a resolve to keep clear of that  
fault, by adding nothing; but I became convinced  
that a spirited translation can scarcely be accom-  
plished in the English language without admitting  
a principle of compensation. On this point, how-  
ever, I do not wish to insist, and merely send the  
following passage, taken at random, from a wish  
to comply with your request. W. W.

BUT Cytherea, studious to invent  
Arts yet untried, upon new counsels bent,  
Resolves that Cupid, changed in form and  
face

To young Ascanius, should assume his  
place;

Present the maddening gifts, and kindle heat  
Of passion at the bosom's inmost seat.

She dreads the treacherous house, the  
double tongue;

She burns, she frets—by Juno's rancour  
stung;

The calm of night is powerless to remove  
These cares, and thus she speaks to winged  
Love:

"O son, my strength, my power! who  
dost despise  
(What, save thyself, none dares through  
earth and skies)

The giant-quelling bolts of Jove, I flee,  
O son, a suppliant to thy deity!  
What perils meet Æneas in his course,  
How Juno's hate with unrelenting force  
Pursues thy brother—this to thee is known;  
And oft-times hast thou made my griefs  
thine own.

Him now the generous Dido by soft chains  
Of bland entreaty at her court detains;  
Junonian hospitalities prepare  
Such apt occasion that I dread a snare.  
Hence, ere some hostile God can intervene,  
Would I, by previous wiles, inflame the  
queen

With passion for Æneas, such strong love  
That at my beck, mine only, she shall  
move.

Hear, and assist;—the father's mandate  
calls

His young Ascanius to the Tyrian walls;  
He comes, my dear delight,—and costliest  
things

Preserved from fire and flood for presents  
brings.

Him will I take, and in close covert keep,  
'Mid groves Idalian, lulled to gentle sleep,  
Or on Cythera's far-sequestered steep,  
That he may neither know what hope is  
mine,

Nor by his presence traverse the design.  
Do thou, but for a single night's brief space,  
Dissemble; be that boy in form and face!  
And when enraptured Dido shall receive  
Thee to her arms, and kisses interweave  
With many a fond embrace, while joy runs  
high,

And goblets crown the proud festivity,  
Instil thy subtle poison, and inspire,  
At every touch, an unsuspected fire."

Love, at the word, before his mother's  
sight

Puts off his wings, and walks, with proud  
delight,

Like young Iulus; but the gentlest dews  
Of slumber Venus sheds, to circumfuse  
The true Ascanius steeped in placid rest;  
Then wafts him, cherished on her careful  
breast,

Through upper air to an Idalian glade,

Where he on soft *amaracus* is laid,  
With breathing flowers embraced, and  
fragrant shade."

But Cupid, following cheerily his guide  
Achates, with the gifts to Carthage hied;  
And, as the hall he entered, there, between  
The sharers of her golden couch, was  
seen

Reclined in festal pomp the Tyrian queen.  
The Trojans, too (Æneas at their head),  
On couches lie, with purple overspread:  
Meantime in canisters is heaped the bread,  
Pellucid water for the hands is borne,  
And napkins of smooth texture, finely  
shorn.

Within are fifty handmaids, who prepare,  
As they in order stand, the dainty fare;  
And fume the household deities with store  
Of odorous incense; while a hundred more  
Matched with an equal number of like  
age,

But each of manly sex, a docile page,  
Marshal the banquet, giving with due grace  
To cup or viand its appointed place.

The Tyrians rushing in, an eager band,  
Their painted couches seek, obedient to  
command.

They look with wonder on the gifts—they  
gaze

Upon Iulus, dazzled with the rays  
That from his ardent countenance-are  
flung,

And charmed to hear his simulating tongue;  
Nor pass unpraised the robe and veil divine,  
Round which the yellow flowers and wan-  
dering foliage twine.

But chiefly Dido, to the coming ill  
Devoted, strives in vain her vast desires to  
fill;

She views the gifts; upon the child then  
turns

Insatiable looks, and gazing burns.  
To ease a father's cheated love he hung  
Upon Æneas, and around him clung;  
Then seeks the queen; with her his arts he  
tries;

She fastens on the boy enamoured eyes,  
Clasps in her arms, nor weens (O lot un-  
blest!)

How great a God, incumbent o'er her  
breast,

Would fill it with his spirit. He, to please  
His Acidalian mother, by degrees

Blots out Sichaeus, studious to remove  
The dead, by influx of a living love,  
By stealthy entrance of a perilous guest.  
Troubling a heart that had been long at rest.

Now when the viands were withdrawn,  
and ceased

The first division of the splendid feast,  
While round a vacant board the chiefs recline,

Huge goblets are brought forth; they crown  
the wine;

Voices of gladness roll the walls around;  
Those gladsome voices from the courts rebound;

From gilded rafters many a blazing light  
Depends, and torches overcome the night.  
The minutes fly—till, at the queen's command,

A bowl of state is offered to her hand:  
Then she, as Belus wont, and all the line  
From Belus, filled it to the brim with wine;  
Silence ensued. "O Jupiter, whose care  
Is hospitable dealing, grant my prayer!  
Productive day be this of lasting joy  
To Tyrians, and these exiles driven from  
Troy;

A day to future generations dear!  
Let Bacchus, donor of soul-quick'ning cheer,

Be present; kindly Juno, be thou near!  
And, Tyrians, may your choicest favours wait

Upon this hour, the bond to celebrate!"  
She spake and shed an offering on the board;

Then sipped the bowl whence she the wine  
had poured

And gave to Bitias, urging the prompt lord;  
He raised the bowl, and took a long deep draught;

Then every chief in turn the beverage  
quaffed.

Graced with redundant hair, Iopas sings  
The lore of Atlas, to resounding strings,  
The labours of the Sun, the lunar wanderings;

When human kind, and brute; what  
natural powers

Engender lightning, whence are falling  
showers.

He haunts Arcturus,—that fraternal twain

The glittering Bears,—the Pleiads fraught  
with rain;

—Why suns in winter, shunning heaven's  
steep heights

Post seaward,—what impedes the tardy  
nights.

The learned song from Tyrian hearers  
draws

Loud shouts,—the Trojans echo the  
applause.

—But, lengthening out the night with converse new,

Large draughts of love unhappy Dido drew;  
Of Priam asked, of Hector—o'er and o'er—  
What arms the son of bright Aurora wore;—

What steeds the car of Diomed could  
boast;

Among the leaders of the Grecian host.

How looked Achilles, their dread paramount—

"But nay—the fatal wiles, O guest, recount,

Retrace the Grecian cunning from its source,  
Your own grief and your friends?—your wandering course;

For now, till this seventh summer have ye  
ranged

The sea, or trod the earth, to peace  
estranged."

1816.

## A FACT, AND AN IMAGINATION

OR,

## CANUTE AND ALFRED, ON THE SEASHORE

The first and last fourteen lines of this poem each make a sonnet, and were composed as such; but I thought that by intermediate lines they might be connected so as to make a whole. One or two expressions are taken from Milton's *History of England*.

THE Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair,  
Mustering a face of haughty sovereignty,  
To aid a covert purpose, cried—"O ye  
Approaching Waters of the deep, that share

With this green isle my fortunes, come not  
where

Your Master's throne is set."—Deaf was  
the Sea;

Her waves rolled on, respecting his decree  
Less than they heed a breath of wanton  
air.

—Then Canute, rising from the invaded  
throne,

Said to his servile Courtiers,—“Poor the  
reach,

The undisguised extent, of mortal sway !

He only is a King, and he alone

Deserves the name (this truth the billows  
preach)

Whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, and  
heaven, obey.”

This just reproof the prosperous Dane  
Drew, from the influx of the main,  
For some whose rugged northern mouths  
would strain

At oriental flattery ;

And Canute (fact more worthy to be  
known)

From that time forth did for his brows  
disown

The ostentatious symbol of a crown ;

Esteeming earthly royalty

Contemptible as vain.

Now hear what one of elder days,

Rich theme of England's fondest praise,

Her darling Alfred, *might* have spoken ;

To cheer the remnant of his host

When he was driven from coast to coast,

Distressed and harassed, but with mind  
unbroken :

“My faithful followers, lo ! the tide is  
spent

That rose, and steadily advanced to fill  
The shores and channels, working Nature's  
will

Among the mazy streams that backward  
went,

And in the sluggish pools where ships are  
pent :

And now, his task performed, the flood  
stands still,

At the green base of many an inland hill,

In placid beauty and sublime content !

Such the repose that sage and hero find ;

Such measured rest the sedulous and good  
Of humbler name ; whose souls do, like  
the flood

Of Ocean, press right on ; or gently wind,

Neither to be diverted nor withstood,

Until they reach the bounds by Heaven  
assigned.”

1816.

## TO DORA

The complaint in my eyes which gave occasion  
to this address to my daughter first showed itself  
as a consequence of inflammation, caught at the  
top of Kirkstone, when I was over-heated by  
having carried up the ascent my eldest son, a  
lusty infant. Frequently has the disease recurred  
since, leaving my eyes in a state which has often  
prevented my reading for months, and makes me  
at this day incapable of bearing without injury  
any strong light by day or night. My acquaintance  
with books has therefore been far short of  
my wishes ; and on this account, to acknowledge  
the services daily and hourly done me by my  
family and friends, this note is written.

*“A little onward lend thy guiding hand  
To these dark steps, a little further on !”*

—What trick of memory to *my* voice hath  
brought

This mournful iteration ? For though  
Time,

The Conqueror, crowns the Conquered, on  
this brow

Planting his favourite silver diadem,

Nor he, nor minister of his—intent

To run before him—hath enrolled me yet.

Though not unmenaced, among those who  
lean

Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight.

—O my own Dora, my beloved child !

Should that day come—but bark ! the  
birds salute

The cheerful dawn, brightening for me the  
east ;

For me, thy natural leader, once again

Impatient to conduct thee, not as erst

A tottering infant, with compliant stoop

From flower to flower supported ; but to  
curb

Thy nymph-like step swift-bounding o'er  
the lawn,

Along the loose rocks, or the slippery verge  
Of foaming torrents.—From thy orisons

Come forth ; and, while the morning air is  
yet

Transparent as the soul of innocent youth.

Let me, thy happy guide, now point thy  
way,

And now precede thee, winding to and fro.

Till we by perseverance gain the top

Of some smooth ridge, whose brink pre-  
cipitous

Kindles intense desire for powers withheld

From this corporeal frame; whereon who  
stands,  
Is seized with strong incitement to push  
forth  
His arms, as swimmers use, and plunge—  
dread thought,  
For pastime plunge—into the "abrupt  
abyss,"—  
Where ravens spread their plumy vans, at  
ease!

And yet more gladly thee would I con-  
duct  
Through woods and spacious forests,—to  
behold  
There, how the Original of human art,  
Heaven-prompted Nature, measures and  
erects  
Her temples, fearless for the stately work,  
Though waves, to every breeze, its high-  
arched roof,  
And storms the pillars rock. But we such  
schools

Of reverential awe will chiefly seek  
In the still summer noon, while beams of  
light,  
Reposing here, and in the aisles beyond  
Traceably gliding through the dusk, recall  
To mind the living presences of nuns;  
A gentle, pensive, white-robed sisterhood,  
Whose saintly radiance mitigates the gloom  
Of those terrestrial fabrics, where they serve,  
To Christ, the Sun of righteousness,  
esposed.

Now also shall the page of classic lore,  
To these glad eyes from bondage freed,  
again  
Lie open; and the book of Holy Writ,  
Again unfolded, passage clear shall yield  
To heights more glorious still, and into  
shades  
More awful, where, advancing hand in  
hand,  
We may be taught, O Darling of my care!  
To calm the affections, elevate the soul,  
And consecrate our lives to truth and love.  
1816.

TO —

ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT  
OF HELVELLYN

Written at Rydal Mount. The lady was Miss  
Blackett, then residing with Mr. Montagu Dur-

goyne at Fox-Ghyll. We were tempted to remain  
too long upon the mountain; and I, imprudently,  
with the hope of shortening the way, led her  
among the crags and down a steep slope which  
entangled us in difficulties that were met by her  
with much spirit and courage.

INMATE of a mountain-dwelling,  
Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed  
From the watch-towers of Helvellyn;  
Awed, delighted, and amazed!

Potent was the spell that bound thee  
Not unwilling to obey;  
For blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,  
Stilled the pantings of dismay.

Lo! the dwindled woods and meadows;  
What a vast abyss is there!  
Lo! the clouds, the solemn shadows,  
And the glistenings—heavenly fair!

And a record of commotion  
Which a thousand ridges yield;  
Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean  
Gleaming like a silver shield!

Maiden! now take flight;—inherit  
Alps or Andes—they are thine!  
With the morning's roseate Spirit,  
Sweep their length of snowy line;

Or survey their bright dominions  
In the gorgeous colours drest  
Flung from off the purple pinions,  
Evening spreads throughout the west!

Thine are all the coral fountains  
Warbling in each sparry vault  
Of the untrodden lunar mountains;  
Listen to their songs!—or halt,

To Niphates' top invited,  
Whither spiteful Satan steered;  
Or descend where the ark alighted,  
When the green earth re-appeared;

For the power of hills is on thee,  
As was witnessed through thine eye  
Then, when old Helvellyn won thee  
To confess their majesty! 1816.

## VERNAL ODE

Composed at Rydal Mount, to place in view the immortality of succession where immortality is denied, as far as we know, to the individual creature.

Rerum Natura tota est nusquam magis quam in minimis.—PLIN. *Nat. Hist.*

## I

BENEATH the concave of an April sky,  
When all the fields with freshest green  
were dight,

Appeared, in presence of the spiritual eye  
That aids or supersedes our grosser sight,  
The form and rich habiliments of One  
Whose countenance bore resemblance to  
the sun,

When it reveals, in evening majesty,  
Features half lost amid their own pure light.  
Poised like a weary cloud, in middle air  
He hung,—then floated with angelic ease  
(Softening that bright effulgence by degrees)  
Till he had reached a summit sharp and  
bare,

Where oft the venturous heifer drinks the  
noontide breeze.

Upon the apex of that lofty cone  
Alighted, there the Stranger stood alone;  
Fair as a gorgeous Fabric of the east  
Suddenly raised by some enchanter's power,  
Where nothing was; and firm as some old  
Tower

Of Britain's realm, whose leafy crest  
Waves high, embellished by a gleaming  
shower!

## II

Beneath the shadow of his purple wings  
Rested a golden harp;—he touched the  
strings;

And, after prelude of unearthly sound  
Poured through the echoing hills around,  
He sang—

“No wintry desolations,  
Scorching blight or noxious dew,  
Affect my native habitations;  
Buried in glory, far beyond the scope  
Of man's inquiring gaze, but to his hope  
Imaged, though faintly, in the hue  
Profound of night's ethereal blue;  
And in the aspect of each radiant orb;—  
Some fixed, some wandering with no timid  
curb:

But wandering star and fixed, to mortal eye,  
Blended in absolute serenity,  
And free from semblance of decline;—  
Fresh as if Evening brought their natal  
hour,

Her darkness splendour gave, her silence  
power

To testify of Love and Grace divine.

## III

“What if those bright fires  
Shine subject to decay,  
Sons haply of extinguished sires,  
Themselves to lose their light, or pass away  
Like clouds before the wind,  
Be thanks poured out to Him whose hand  
bestows,

Nightly, on human kind  
That vision of endurance and repose.  
—And though to every draught of vital  
breath

Renewed throughout the bounds of earth  
or ocean,

The melancholy gates of Death  
Respond with sympathetic motion;  
Though all that feeds on nether air,  
Howe'er magnificent or fair,  
Grows but to perish, and entrust  
Its ruins to their kindred dust;  
Yet, by the Almighty's ever-during care,  
Her procreant vigils Nature keeps  
Amid the unfathomable deeps;  
And saves the peopled fields of earth  
From dread of emptiness or dearth.  
Thus, in their stations, lifting tow'rd the  
sky

The foliated head in cloud-like majesty,  
The shadow-casting race of trees survive:  
Thus, in the train of Spring, arrive  
Sweet flowers;—what living eye hath viewed  
Their myriads?—endlessly renewed,  
Wherever strikes the sun's glad ray;  
Where'er the subtle waters stray;  
Wherever sportive breezes bend  
Their course, or genial showers descend!  
Mortals, rejoice! the very Angels quit  
Their mansions unsusceptible of change,  
Amid your pleasant bowers to sit,  
And through your sweet vicissitudes to  
range!”

## IV

Oh, nursed at happy distance from the cares  
Of a too-anxious world, mild pastoral Muse!

That, to the sparkling crown Urania wears,  
And to her sister Clio's laurel wreath,  
Prefer'st a garland culled from purple heath,  
Or blooming thicket moist with morning  
dews;

Was such bright Spectacle vouchsafed to  
me?

And was it granted to the simple ear  
Of thy contented Volary  
Such melody to hear!

*Him* rather suits it, side by side with thee,  
Wrapped in a fit of pleasing indolence,  
While thy tired lute hangs on the hawthorn-  
tree,

To lie and listen—till o'er-drows'd sense  
Sinks, hardly conscious of the influence—  
To the soft murmur of the vagrant Bee.

—A slender sound! yet hoary Time  
Doth to the *Soul* exalt it with the chime  
Of all his years;—a company  
Of ages coming, ages gone;

(Nations from before them sweeping,  
Regions in destruction steeping.)

But every awful note in unison  
With that faint utterance, which tells  
Of treasure sucked from buds and bells,  
For the pure keeping of those waxen cells;  
Where She—a statist prudent to confer  
Upon the common weal; a warrior bold,  
Radiant all over with unburnished gold,  
And armed with living spear for mortal  
fight;

A cunning forager

That spreads no waste; a social builder;  
one

In whom all busy offices unite  
With all fine functions that afford delight—  
Safe through the winter storm in quiet  
dwells!

v

And is She brought within the power  
Of vision?—o'er this tempting flower  
Hovering until the petals stay  
Her flight, and take its voice away!—  
Observe each wing!—a tiny van!  
The structure of her laden thigh,  
How fragile! yet of ancestry  
Mysteriously remote and high;  
High as the imperial front of man;  
The roseate bloom on woman's cheek;  
The soaring eagle's curv'd beak;  
The white plumes of the floating swan;  
Old as the tiger's paw, the lion's mane

Ere shaken by that mood of stern disdain  
At which the desert trembles.—Humming  
Bee!

Thy sting was needless then, perchance  
unknown,

The seeds of malice were not sown;  
All creatures met in peace, from fierceness  
free,

And no pride blended with their dignity.  
—Tears had not broken from their source;  
Nor Anguish strayed from her Tartarean  
den;

The golden years maintained a course  
Not undiversified though smooth and even;  
We were not mocked with glimpse and  
shadow then,

Bright Seraphs mixed familiarly with men;  
And earth and stars composed a universal  
heaven!

1817.

#### ODE TO LYCORIS. MAY 1817

The discerning reader, who is aware that in the poem of Ellen Irwin I was desirous of throwing the reader at once out of the old ballad, so as, if possible, to preclude a comparison between that mode of dealing with the subject and the mode I meant to adopt—may here perhaps perceive that this poem originated in the four last lines of the first stanza. Those specks of snow, reflected in the lake and so transferred, as it were, to the subaqueous sky, reminded me of the swans which the fancy of the ancient classic poets yoked to the car of Venus. Hence the tenor of the whole first stanza, and the name of Lycoris, which—with some readers who think my theology and classical allusion too far-fetched and therefore more or less unnatural and affected—will tend to unrealise the sentiment that pervades these verses. But surely one who has written so much in verse as I have done may be allowed to retrace his steps in the regions of fancy which delighted him in his boyhood, when he first became acquainted with the Greek and Roman Poets. Before I read Virgil I was so strongly attached to Ovid, whose *Metamorphoses* I read at school, that I was quite in a passion whenever I found him, in books of criticism, placed below Virgil. As to Homer, I was never weary of travelling over the scenes through which he led me. Classical literature affected me by its own beauty. But the truths of scripture having been entrusted to the dead languages, and these fountains having been recently laid open at the Reformation, an importance and a sanctity were at that period attached to classical literature



that extended, as is obvious in Milton's *Lycidas*, for example, both to its spirit and form in a degree that can never be revived. No doubt the hackneyed and lifeless use into which mythology fell towards the close of the 17th century, and which continued through the 18th, disgusted the general reader with all allusion to it in modern verse; and though, in deference to this disgust, and also in a measure participating in it, I abstained in my earlier writings from all introduction of pagan fable, surely, even in its humble form, it may ally itself with real sentiment, as I can truly affirm it did in the present case.

## I

AN age hath been when Earth was proud  
Of lustre too intense  
To be sustained; and Mortals bowed  
The front in self-defence.  
Who *then*, if Dian's crescent gleamed,  
Or Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed  
While on the wing the Urchin played,  
Could fearlessly approach the shade?  
—Enough for one soft vernal day.  
If I, a bard of ebbing time,  
And nurtured in a fickle clime,  
May haunt this horned bay;  
Whose amorous water multiplies  
The flitting halcyon's vivid dyes;  
And smooths her liquid breast—to show  
These swan-like specks of mountain snow,  
White as the pair that slid along the plains  
Of heaven, when Venus held the reins!

## II

In youth we love the darksome lawn  
Brushed by the owl's wing;  
Then, Twilight is preferred to Dawn,  
And Autumn to the Spring.  
Sad fancies do we then affect,  
In luxury of disrespect  
To our own prodigal excess  
Of too familiar happiness.  
*Lycoris* (if such name befit  
Thee, thee my life's celestial sign!)  
When Nature marks the year's decline,  
Be ours to welcome it;  
Pleased with the harvest hope that runs  
Before the path of milder suns;  
Pleased while the sylvan world displays  
Its ripeness to the feeding gaze;  
Pleased when the sullen winds resound the  
knell  
Of the resplendent miracle.

## III

But something whispers to my heart  
That, as we downward tend,  
*Lycoris*! life requires an *art*  
To which our souls must bend;  
A skill—to balance and supply;  
And, ere the flowing fount be dry,  
As soon it must, a sense to sip,  
Or drink, with no fastidious lip.  
Then welcome, above all, the Guest  
Whose smiles, diffused o'er land and sea,  
Seem to recall the Deity  
Of youth into the breast:  
May pensive Autumn ne'er present  
A claim to her disparagement!  
While blossoms and the budding spray  
Inspire us in our own decay;  
Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal,  
Be hopeful Spring the favourite of the Soul!

## TO THE SAME

This as well as the preceding and the two that follow were composed in front of Rydal Mount and during my walks in the neighbourhood. Nine-tenths of my verses have been murmured out in the open air: and here let me repeat what I believe has already appeared in print. One day a stranger having walked round the garden and grounds of Rydal Mount asked one of the female servants, who happened to be at the door, permission to see her master's study. "This," said she, leading him forward, "is my master's library where he keeps his books, but his study is out of doors." After a long absence from home it has more than once happened that some one of my cottage neighbours has said—"Well, there he is; we are glad to hear him *boing* about again." Once more, in excuse for so much egotism, let me say, these notes are written for my familiar friends, and at their earnest request. Another time a gentleman whom James had conducted through the grounds asked him what kind of plants thrived best there: after a little consideration he answered—"Laurels." "That is," said the stranger, "as it should be; don't you know that the laurel is the emblem of poetry, and that poets used on public occasions to be crowned with it?" James stared when the question was first put, but was doubtless much pleased with the information.

ENOUGH of climbing toil!—Ambition treads  
Here, as 'mid busier scenes, ground steep  
and rough,  
Or slippery even to peril! and each step,

As we for most uncertain recompence  
 Mount toward the empire of the fickle  
     clouds,  
 Each weary step, dwarfing the world  
     below,  
 Induces, for its old familiar sights,  
 Unacceptable feelings of contempt,  
 With wonder mixed—that Man could e'er be  
     tied,  
 In anxious bondage, to such nice array  
 And formal fellowship of petty things!  
 —Oh! 'tis the *heart* that magnifies this  
     life,  
 Making a truth and beauty of her own;  
 And moss-grown alleys, circumscribing  
     shades,  
 And gurgling rills, assist her in the work  
 More efficaciously than realms outspread,  
 As in a map, before the adventurer's gaze—  
 Ocean and Earth contending for regard.  
 The umbrageous woods are left—how far  
     beneath!  
 But lo! where darkness seems to guard the  
     mouth  
 Of yon wild cave, whose jagged brows are  
     fringed  
 With flaccid threads of ivy, in the still  
 And sultry air, depending motionless.  
 Yet cool the space within, and not uncheered  
 (As whoso enters shall ere long perceive)  
 By stealthy influx of the timid day  
 Mingling with night, such twilight to  
     compose  
 As Numa loved; when, in the Egerian  
     grot,  
 From the sage Nymph appearing at his  
     wish,  
 He gained whate'er a regal mind might  
     ask,  
 Or need, of counsel breathed through lips  
     divine.  
 Long as the heat shall rage, let that dim  
     cave  
 Protect us, there deciphering as we may  
 Diluvian records; or the sighs of Earth  
 Interpreting; or counting for old Time  
 His minutes, by reiterated drops,  
 Audible tears, from some invisible source  
 That deepens upon fancy—more and more  
 Drawn toward the centre whence those  
     sighs creep forth  
 To awe the lightness of humanity:  
 Or, shutting up thyself within thyself,  
 There let me see thee sink into a mood

Of gentler thought, protracted till thine  
     eye  
 Be calm as water when the winds are  
     gone,  
 And no one can tell whither. Dearest  
     Friend!  
 We two have known such happy hours  
     together  
 That, were power granted to replace them  
     (fetched  
 From out the pensive shadows where they  
     lie)  
 In the first warmth of their original sun-  
     shine,  
 Loth should I be to use it: passing sweet  
 Are the domains of tender memory!  
1817.

## THE LONGEST DAY

## ADDRESSED TO MY DAUGHTER

Suggested by the sight of my daughter (Dora)  
 playing in front of Rydal Mount; and composed  
 in a great measure the same afternoon. I have  
 often wished to pair this poem upon the *longest*  
 with one upon the *shortest*, day, and regret even  
 now that it has not been done.

LET us quit the leafy arbour,  
 And the torrent murmuring by;  
 For the sun is in his harbour,  
 Weary of the open sky.

Evening now unbinds the fetters  
 Fashioned by the glowing light;  
 All that breathe are thankful debtors  
 To the harbinger of night.

Yet by some grave thoughts attended  
 Eve renews her calm career:  
 For the day that now is ended,  
 Is the longest of the year.

Dora! sport, as now thou sportest,  
 On this platform, light and free;  
 Take thy bliss, while longest, shortest,  
 Are indifferent to thee!

Who would check the happy feeling  
 That inspires the linnet's song?  
 Who would stop the swallow, wheeling  
 On her pinions swift and strong?

Yet at this impressive season,  
Words which tenderness can speak  
From the truths of homely reason,  
Might exalt the loveliest cheek ;

And, while shades to shades succeeding  
Steal the landscape from the sight,  
I would urge this moral pleading,  
Last forerunner of " Good night ! "

SUMMER ebbs ;—each day that follows  
Is a reflux from on high,  
Tending to the darksome hollows  
Where the frosts of winter lie.

He who governs the creation,  
In his providence, assigned  
Such a gradual declination  
To the life of human kind.

Yet we mark it not ;—fruits redden,  
Fresh flowers blow, as flowers have blown,  
And the heart is loth to deaden  
Hopes that she so long hath known.

Be thou wiser, youthful Maiden !  
And when thy decline shall come,  
Let not flowers, or boughs fruit-laden,  
Hide the knowledge of thy doom.

Now, even now, ere wrapped in slumber,  
Fix thine eyes upon the sea  
That absorbs time, space, and number ;  
Look thou to Eternity !

Follow thou the flowing river  
On whose breast are thither borne  
All deceived, and each deceiver,  
Through the gates of night and morn ;

Through the year's successive portals ;  
Through the bounds which many a star  
Marks, not mindless of frail mortals  
When his light returns from far.

Thus when thou with Time hast travelled  
Toward the mighty gulf of things,  
And the mazy stream unravelled  
With thy best imaginings ;

Think, if thou on beauty leanest,  
Think how pitiful that stay,  
Did not virtue give the meaneast  
Charms superior to decay.

Duty, like a strict preceptor,  
Sometimes frowns, or seems to frown ;  
Choose her thistle for thy sceptre,  
While youth's roses are thy crown.

Grasp it,—if thou shrink and tremble,  
Fairest damsel of the green,  
Thou wilt lack the only symbol  
That proclaims a genuine queen ;

And ensures those palms of honour  
Which selected spirits wear,  
Bending low before the Donor,  
Lord of heaven's unchanging year !

1817.

## HINT FROM THE MOUNTAINS

## FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL PRETENDERS

Bunches of fern may often be seen wheeling about in the wind as here described. The particular bunch that suggested these verses was noticed in the Pass of Dunmail Raise. The verses were composed in 1817, but the application is for all times and places.

" WHO but hails the sight with pleasure  
When the wings of genius rise,  
Their ability to measure

With great enterprise ;  
But in man was ne'er such daring  
As yon Hawk exhibits, pairing  
His brave spirit with the war in  
The stormy skies !

" Mark him, how his power he uses,  
Lays it by, at will resumes !  
Mark, ere for his haunt he chooses  
Clouds and utter glooms !

There, he wheels in downward mazes ;  
Sunward now his flight he raises,  
Catches fire, as seems, and blazes  
With uninjured plumes !"—

## ANSWER

" Stranger, 'tis no act of courage  
Which aloft thou dost discern ;  
No bold *bird* gone forth to forage  
'Mid the tempest stern ;  
But such mockery as the nations  
See, when public perturbations  
Lift men from their native stations  
Like yon TUFT OF FERN ;

"Such it is; the aspiring creature  
Soaring on undaunted wing,  
(So you fancied) is by nature  
A dull helpless thing,  
Dry and withered, light and yellow;—  
*That* to be the tempest's fellow!  
Wait—and you shall see how hollow  
Its endeavouring!" 1817.

## THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE

Written at Rydal Mount. Thoughts and feelings of many walks in all weathers, by day and night, over this Pass, alone and with beloved friends.

## I

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work.  
A deep delight the bosom thrills  
Oft as I pass along the fork  
Of these fraternal hills:  
Where, save the rugged road, we find  
No appanage of human kind,  
Nor hint of man; if stone or rock  
Seem not his handywork to mock  
By something cognizably shaped;  
Mockery—or model roughly hewn,  
And left as if by earthquake strewn,  
Or from the Flood escaped:  
Altars for Druid service fit;  
(But where no fire was ever lit,  
Unless the glow-worm to the skies  
Thence offer nightly sacrifice)  
Wrinkled Egyptian monument;  
Green moss-grown tower; or hoary tent;  
Tents of a camp that never shall be razed—  
On which four thousand years have gazed!

## II

Ye plough-shares sparkling on the slopes!  
Ye snow-white lambs that trip  
Imprisoned 'mid the formal props  
Of restless ownership!  
Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall  
To feed the insatiate Prodigal!  
Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and fields,  
All that the fertile valley shields;  
Wages of folly—baits of crime,  
Of life's uneasy game the stake,  
Playthings that keep the eyes awake  
Of drowsy, dotard Time;—  
O care! O guilt!—O vales and plains,  
Here, 'mid his own unvexed domains,

A Genius dwells, that can subdue  
At once all memory of You,—  
Most potent when mists veil the sky,  
Mists that distort and magnify;  
While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping  
breeze,  
Sigh forth their ancient melodies!

## III

List to those shriller notes!—*that* march  
Perchance was on the blast,  
When, through this Height's inverted arch,  
Rome's earliest legion passed!  
—They saw, adventurously impelled,  
And older eyes than theirs beheld,  
This black—and yon, whose church-like  
frame

Gives to this savage Pass its name.  
Aspiring Road! that lov'st to hide  
Thy daring in a vapoury bourn,  
Not seldom may the hour return  
When thou shalt be my guide:  
And I (as all men may find cause,  
When life is at a weary pause,  
And they have panted up the hill  
Of duty with reluctant will)  
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,  
For the rich bounties of constraint;  
Whence oft invigorating transports flow  
That choice lacked courage to bestow!

## IV

My Soul was grateful for delight  
That wore a threatening brow;  
A veil is lifted—can she slight  
The scene that opens now?  
Though habitation none appear,  
The greenness tells, man must be there;  
The shelter—that the perspective  
Is of the clime in which we live;  
Where Toil pursues his daily round;  
Where Pity sheds sweet tears—and Love,  
In woodbine bower or birchen grove,  
Inflicts his tender wound.  
—Who comes not hither ne'er shall know  
How beautiful the world below;  
Nor can he guess how lightly leaps  
The brook adown the rocky steeps.  
Farewell, thou desolate Domain!  
Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,  
Carols like a shepherd-boy;  
And who is she?—Can that be Joy!  
Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,

Smoothly skims the meadows wide;  
 While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,  
 To hill and vale proclaims aloud,  
 "Whate'er the weak may dread, the wicked  
     dare,  
 Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion,  
     fair!" 1817.

## LAMENT OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

### ON THE EVE OF A NEW YEAR

This arose out of a flash of moonlight that struck the ground when I was approaching the steps that lead from the garden at Rydal Mount to the front of the house. "From her sunk eye a stagnant tear stole forth" is taken, with some loss, from a discarded poem, "The Convict," in which occurred, when he was discovered lying in the cell, these lines:—

"But now he upraises the deep-sunken eye,  
 The motion unsettles a tear;  
 The silence of sorrow it seems to supply  
 And asks of me—why I am here."

#### I

SMILE of the Moon!—for so I name  
 That silent greeting from above;  
 A gentle flash of light that came  
 From her whom drooping captives love;  
 Or art thou of still higher birth?  
 Thou that didst part the clouds of earth,  
 My torpor to reprove!

#### II

Bright boon of pitying Heaven!—alas,  
 I may not trust thy placid cheer!  
 Pondering that Time to-night will pass  
 The threshold of another year;  
 For years to me are sad and dull;  
 My very moments are too full  
 Of hopelessness and fear.

#### III

And yet, the soul-awakening gleam,  
 That struck perchance the farthest cone  
 Of Scotland's rocky wilds, did seem  
 To visit me, and me alone;  
 Me, unapproached by any friend,  
 Save those who to my sorrows lend  
 Tears due unto their own.

#### IV

To-night the church-tower bells will ring  
 Through these wild realms a festive peal;  
 To the new year a welcoming;  
 A tuneful offering for the weal  
 Of happy millions lulled in sleep;  
 While I am forced to watch and weep,  
 By wounds that may not heal.

#### V

Born all too high, by wedlock raised  
 Still higher—to be cast thus low!  
 Would that mine eyes had never gazed  
 On aught of more ambitious show  
 Than the sweet flowerets of the fields  
 —It is my royal state that yields  
 This bitterness of woe.

#### VI

Yet how?—for I, if there be truth  
 In the world's voice, was passing fair;  
 And beauty, for confiding youth,  
 Those shocks of passion can prepare  
 That kill the bloom before its time;  
 And blanch, without the owner's crime,  
 The most resplendent hair.

#### VII

Unblest distinction! showered on me  
 To bind a lingering life in chains:  
 All that could quit my grasp, or flee,  
 Is gone;—but not the subtle stains  
 Fixed in the spirit; for even here  
 Can I be proud that jealous fear  
 Of what I was remains.

#### VIII

A Woman rules my prison's key;  
 A sister Queen, against the bent  
 Of law and holiest sympathy,  
 Detains me, doubtful of the event;  
 Great God, who feel'st for my distress,  
 My thoughts are all that I possess,  
 O keep them innocent!

#### IX

Farewell desire of human aid,  
 Which abject mortals vainly court!  
 By friends deceived, by foes betrayed,  
 Of fears the prey, of hopes the sport;  
 Nought but the world-redeeming Cross  
 Is able to supply my loss,  
 My burthen to support.

## X

Hark ! the death-note of the year  
 Sounded by the castle-clock !  
 From her sunk eyes a stagnant tear  
 Stole forth, unsettled by the shock ;  
 But oft the woods renewed their green,  
 Ere the tired head of Scotland's Queen  
 Reposed upon the block ! 1817.

## SEQUEL TO THE "BEGGARS," 1802

## COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER

WHERE are they now, those wanton Boys?  
 For whose free range the dædal earth  
 Was filled with animated toys,  
 And implements of frolic mirth ;  
 With tools for ready wit to guide ;  
 And ornaments of seemlier pride,  
 More fresh, more bright, than princes wear ;  
 For what one moment flung aside,  
 Another could repair ;  
 What good or evil have they seen  
 Since I their pastime witnessed here,  
 Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer ?  
 I ask—but all is dark between !

They met me in a genial hour,  
 When universal nature breathed  
 As with the breath of one sweet flower,—  
 A time to overrule the power  
 Of discontent, and check the birth  
 Of thoughts with better thoughts at strife,  
 The most familiar bane of life  
 Since parting Innocence bequeathed  
 Mortality to Earth !  
 Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,  
 Sailed through the sky—the brooks ran  
 clear ;

The lambs from rock to rock were bounding ;  
 With songs the budded groves resounding ;  
 And to my heart are still endeared  
 The thoughts with which it then was  
 cheered ;

The faith which saw that gladsome pair  
 Walk through the fire with unsinged hair.  
 Or, if such faith must needs deceive—  
 Then, Spirits of beauty and of grace,  
 Associates in that eager chase ;  
 Ye, who within the blameless mind  
 Your favourite seat of empire find—  
 Kind Spirits ! may we not believe  
 That they, so happy and so fair  
 Through your sweet influence, and the care

Of pitying Heaven, at least were free  
 From touch of *deadly* injury ?  
 Destined whate'er their earthly doom,  
 For mercy and immortal bloom !

1817.

## THE PILGRIM'S DREAM

## OR, THE STAR AND THE GLOW-WORM

I distinctly recollect the evening when these verses were suggested in 1818. It was on the road between Rydal and Grasmere, where Glow-worms abound. A Star was shining above the ridge of Loughrigg Fell, just opposite. I remember a critic, in some review or other, crying out against this piece. "What so monstrous," said he, "as to make a star talk to a glow-worm !" Poor fellow ! we know from this sage observation what the "primrose on the river's brim was to him."

A PILGRIM, when the summer day  
 Had closed upon his weary way,  
 A lodging begged beneath a castle's roof ;  
 But him the haughty Warder spurned ;  
 And from the gate the Pilgrim turned,  
 To seek such covert as the field  
 Or heath-besprinkled copse might yield,  
 Or lofty wood, shower-proof.

He paced along ; and, pensively,  
 Halting beneath a shady tree,  
 Whose moss-grown root might serve for  
 couch or seat,  
 Fixed on a Star his upward eye ;  
 Then, from the tenant of the sky  
 He turned, and watched with kindred look,  
 A Glow-worm, in a dusky nook,  
 Apparent at his feet.

The murmur of a neighbouring stream  
 Induced a soft and slumbrous dream,  
 A pregnant dream, within whose shadowy  
 bounds

He recognised the earth-born Star,  
 And *That* which glittered from afar ;  
 And (strange to witness !) from the frame  
 Of the ethereal Orb, there came  
 Intelligible sounds.

Much did it taunt the humble Light  
 That now, when day was fled, and night  
 Hushed the dark earth, fast closing weary  
 eyes,

A very reptile could presume  
To show her taper in the gloom,  
As if in rivalry with One  
Who sate a ruler on his throne  
Erected in the skies.

"Exalted Star!" the Worm replied,  
"Abate this unbecoming pride,  
Or with a less uneasy lustre shine;  
Thou shrink'st as momentarily thy rays  
Are mastered by the breathing haze;  
While neither mist, nor thickest cloud  
That shapes in heaven its murky shroud,  
Hath power to injure mine.

But not for this do I aspire  
To match the spark of local fire,  
That at my will burns on the dewy lawn,  
With thy acknowledged glories;—No!  
Yet, thus upbraided, I may show  
What favours do attend me here,  
Till, like thyself, I disappear  
Before the purple dawn."

When this in modest guise was said,  
Across the welkin seemed to spread  
A boding sound—for aught but sleep unfit!  
Hills quaked, the rivers backward ran;  
That Star, so proud of late, looked wan;  
And reeled with visionary stir  
In the blue depth, like Lucifer  
Cast headlong to the pit!

Fire raged: and, when the spangled floor  
Of ancient ether was no more,  
New heavens succeeded, by the dream  
brought forth:

And all the happy Souls that rode  
Transfigured through that fresh abode,  
Had heretofore, in humble trust,  
Shone meekly 'mid their native dust,  
The Glow-worms of the earth!

This knowledge, from an Angel's voice  
Proceeding, made the heart rejoice  
Of Him who slept upon the open lea:  
Waking at morn he murmured not;  
And, till life's journey closed, the spot  
Was to the Pilgrim's soul endeared,  
Where by that dream he had been cheered  
Beneath the shady tree.

1818.

## INSCRIPTIONS

SUPPOSED TO BE FOUND IN AND NEAR A  
HERMIT'S CELL

1818

I

HOPE what are they?—Beads of morning  
Strung on slender blades of grass;  
Or a spider's web adorning  
In a strait and treacherous pass.

What are fears but voices airy?  
Whispering harm where harm is not;  
And deluding the unwary  
Till the fatal bolt is shot!

What is glory?—in the socket  
See how dying tapers fare!  
What is pride?—a whizzing rocket  
That would emulate a star.

What is friendship?—do not trust her,  
Nor the vows which she has made;  
Diamonds dart their brightest lustre  
From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth?—a staff rejected;  
Duty?—an unwelcome clog;  
Joy?—a moon by fits reflected  
In a swamp or watery bog;

Bright, as if through ether steering,  
To the Traveller's eye it shone:  
He hath hailed it re-appearing—  
And as quickly it is gone;

Such is Joy—as quickly hidden,  
Or mis-shapen to the sight,  
And by sullen weeds forbidden  
To resume its native light.

What is youth?—a dancing billow,  
(Winds behind, and rocks before!)  
Age?—a drooping, tottering willow  
On a flat and lazy shore.

What is peace?—when pain is over,  
And love ceases to rebel,  
Let the last faint sigh discover  
That precedes the passing knell!

## II

## INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK

The monument of ice here spoken of I observed while ascending the middle road of the three ways that lead from Rydal to Grasmere. It was on my right hand, and my eyes were upon it when it fell, as told in these lines.

PAUSE, Traveller! whosoe'er thou be  
Whom chance may lead to this retreat,  
Where silence yields reluctantly  
Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat;

Give voice to what my hand shall trace,  
And fear not lest an idle sound  
Of words unsuited to the place  
Disturb its solitude profound.

I saw this Rock, while vernal air  
Blew softly o'er the russet heath,  
Uphold a Monument as fair  
As church or abbey furnisheth.

Unsullied did it meet the day,  
Like marble, white, like ether, pure;  
As if, beneath, some hero lay,  
Honoured with costliest sepulture.

My fancy kindled as I gazed;  
And, ever as the sun shone forth,  
The flattered structure glistened, blazed,  
And seemed the proudest thing on earth.

But frost had reared the gorgeous Pile  
Unsound as those which Fortune builds—  
To undermine with secret guile,  
Sapped by the very beam that gilds.

And, while I gazed, with sudden shock  
Fell the whole Fabric to the ground;  
And naked left this dripping Rock,  
With shapeless ruin spread around!

## III

Where the second quarry now is, as you pass from Rydal to Grasmere, there was formerly a length of smooth rock that sloped towards the road, on the right hand. I used to call it Tadpole Slope, from having frequently observed there the

water-bubbles gliding under the ice, exactly in the shape of that creature.

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,  
Bubbles gliding under ice,  
Bodied forth and evanescent,  
No one knows by what device?

Such are thoughts!—A wind-swept meadow  
Mimicking a troubled sea,  
Such is life; and death a shadow  
From the rock eternity!

## IV

## NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE

TROUBLED long with warring notions  
Long impatient of thy rod,  
I resign my soul's emotions  
Unto Thee, mysterious God!

What avails the kindly shelter  
Yielded by this craggy rent,  
If my spirit toss and welter  
On the waves of discontent?

Parching Summer hath no warrant  
To consume this crystal Well;  
Rains, that make each rill a torrent,  
Neither sully it nor swell.

Thus, dishonouring not her station,  
Would my Life present to Thee,  
Gracious God, the pure oblation  
Of divine tranquillity!

## V

NOT seldom, clad in radiant vest,  
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn;  
Not seldom Evening in the west  
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,  
To the confiding Bark, untrue;  
And, if she trust the stars above,  
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread  
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend,  
Draws lightning down upon the head  
It promised to defend.



But Thou art true, incarnate Lord,  
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die;  
Thy smile is sure, thy plighted word  
No change can falsify!

I bent before thy gracious throne,  
And asked for peace on suppliant knee;  
And peace was given,—nor peace alone,  
But faith sublimed to ecstasy!

### COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRAORDINARY SPLEN- DOUR AND BEAUTY

Felt and in a great measure composed upon the little mount in front of our abode at Rydal. In concluding my notices of this class of poems it may be as well to observe that among the "Miscellaneous Sonnets" are a few alluding to morning impressions which might be read with mutual benefit in connection with these "Evening Voluntaries." See, for example, that one on Westminster Bridge, that composed on a May morning, the one on the song of the Thrush, and that beginning—"While beams of orient light shoot wide and high."

#### I

HAD this effulgence disappeared  
With flying haste, I might have sent,  
Among the speechless clouds, a look  
Of blank astonishment;  
But 'tis endued with power to stay,  
And sanctify one closing day,  
That frail Mortality may see—  
What is?—ah no, but what *can* be!  
Time was when field and watery cove  
With modulated echoes rang,  
While choirs of fervent Angels sang  
Their vespers in the grove;  
Or, crowning, star-like, each some sovereign  
height,  
Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,  
Strains suitable to both.—Such holy rite,  
Methinks, if audibly repeated now  
From hill or valley, could not move  
Sublimier transport, purer love,  
Than doth this silent spectacle—the gleam—  
The shadow—and the peace supreme!

#### II

No sound is uttered,—but a deep  
And solemn harmony pervades

The hollow vale from steep to steep,  
And penetrate the glades.  
Far-distant images draw nigh,  
Called forth by wondrous potency  
Of beamy radiance, that imbues,  
Whate'er it strikes, with gem-like hues!  
In vision exquisitely clear,  
Herds range along the mountain side;  
And glistening antlers are descried;  
And gilded flocks appear.  
Thine is the tranquil hour, purpureal  
Eve!

But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,  
Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe  
That this magnificence is wholly thine!  
—From worlds not quickened by the sun  
A portion of the gift is won;  
An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is  
spread  
On ground which British shepherds tread!

#### III

And, if there be whom broken ties  
Afflict, or injuries assail,  
Yon hazy ridges to their eyes  
Present a glorious scale,  
Climbing suffused with sunny air,  
To stop—no record hath told where!  
And tempting Fancy to ascend,  
And with immortal Spirits blend!<sup>1</sup>  
—Wings at my shoulders seem to play;  
But, rooted here, I stand and gaze  
On those bright steps that heavenward  
raise  
Their practicable way.  
Come forth, ye drooping old men, look  
abroad,  
And see to what fair countries ye are bound!  
And if some traveller, weary of his road,  
Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy  
ground,  
Ye Genii! to his covert speed;  
And wake him with such gentle heed  
As may attune his soul to meet the dower  
Bestowed on this transcendent hour!

#### IV

Such hues from their celestial Urn  
Were wont to stream before mine eye,  
Where'er it wandered in the morn  
Of blissful infancy.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

This glimpse of glory, why renewed?  
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude;  
 For, if a vestige of those gleams  
 Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.  
 Dread Power! whom peace and calmness  
 serve

No less than Nature's threatening voice,  
 If aught unworthy be my choice,  
 From THEE if I would swerve;  
 Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light  
 Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;  
 Which, at this moment, on my waking  
 sight

Appears to shine, by miracle restored;  
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,  
 Rejoices in a second birth!  
 —'Tis past, the visionary splendour fades;  
 And night approaches with her shades.

1818.

NOTE.—The multiplication of mountain-ridges, described at the commencement of the third Stanza of this Ode, as a kind of Jacob's Ladder, leading to Heaven, is produced either by watery vapours, or sunny haze;—in the present instance by the latter cause. Allusions to the Ode, entitled "Intimations of Immortality," pervade the last stanza of the foregoing Poem.

## COMPOSED DURING A STORM

Written in Rydal Woods, by the side of a  
 torrent.

ONE who was suffering tumult in his soul,  
 Yet failed to seek the sure relief of prayer,  
 Went forth—his course surrendering to the  
 care

Of the fierce wind, while mid-day lightnings  
 prowled

Insidiously, untimely thunders growl;  
 While trees, dim-seen, in frenzied numbers,  
 tear

The lingering remnant of their yellow hair,  
 And shivering wolves, surprised with dark-  
 ness, howl

As if the sun were not. He raised his eye  
 Soul-smitten; for, that instant, did appear  
 Large space ('mid dreadful clouds) of purest  
 sky,

An azure disc—shield of Tranquillity;  
 Invisible, unlooked-for, minister  
 Of providential goodness ever nigh!

1819.

THIS, AND THE TWO FOLLOW-  
ING, WERE SUGGESTED BY MR.  
W. WESTALL'S VIEWS OF THE  
CAVES, ETC., IN YORKSHIRE

PURE element of waters! wheresoe'er  
 Thou dost forsake thy subterranean haunts,  
 Green herbs, bright flowers, and berry-  
 bearing plants,

Rise into life and in thy train appear:  
 And, through the sunny portion of the  
 year,

Swift insects shine, thy hovering pursui-  
 vants:

And, if thy bounty fail, the forest pants;  
 And hart and hind and hunter with his  
 spear,

Languish and droop together. Nor unfelt  
 In man's perturbed soul thy sway benign;  
 And, haply, far within the marble belt  
 Of central earth, where tortured Spirits  
 pine

For grace and goodness lost, thy murmurs  
 melt

Their anguish,—and they blend sweet  
 songs with thine.<sup>1</sup> 1819.

## MALHAM COVE

WAS the aim frustrated by force or guile,  
 When giants scooped from out the rocky  
 ground,

Tier under tier, this semicirque profound?  
 (Giants—the same who built in Erin's isle  
 That Causeway with incomparable toil!)—  
 Oh, had this vast theatric structure wound  
 With finished sweep into a perfect round,  
 No mightier work had gained the plausive  
 smile

Of all-beholding Phœbus! But, alas,  
 Vain earth! false world! Foundations  
 must be laid

In Heaven; for, 'mid the wreck of is and  
 WAS,

Things incomplete and purposes betrayed  
 Make sadder transits o'er thought's optic  
 glass

Than noblest objects utterly decayed.

1819.

<sup>1</sup> Waters (as Mr. Westall informs us in the  
 letterpress prefixed to his admirable views) are  
 invariably found to flow through these caverns.

## GORDALE

At early dawn, or rather when the air  
 Glimmers with fading light, and shadowy  
 Eve  
 Is busiest to confer and to bereave;  
 Then, pensive Votary! let thy feet repair  
 To Gordale-chasm, terrific as the lair  
 Where the young lions couch; for so, by  
 leave  
 Of the propitious hour, thou may'st perceive  
 The local Deity, with oozy hair  
 And mineral crown, beside his jagged urn,  
 Recumbent: Him thou may'st behold, who  
 hides  
 His lineaments by day, yet there presides,  
 Teaching the docile waters how to turn,  
 Or (if need be) impediment to spurn,  
 And force their passage to the salt-sea  
 tides! 1819.

"AERIAL ROCK—WHOSE  
 SOLITARY BROW"

A projecting point of Loughrigg, nearly in  
 front of Rydal Mount. Thence looking at it,  
 you are struck with the boldness of its aspect;  
 but walking under it, you admire the beauty of  
 its details. It is vulgarly called Holme-scar,  
 probably from the insulated pasture by the  
 waterside below it.

AERIAL Rock—whose solitary brow  
 From this low threshold daily meets my  
 sight;  
 When I step forth to hail the morning light;  
 Or quit the stars with a lingering farewell  
 —how  
 Shall Fancy pay to thee a grateful vow?  
 How, with the Muse's aid, her love attest?  
 —By planting on thy naked head the crest  
 Of an imperial Castle, which the plough  
 Of ruin shall not touch. Innocent scheme!  
 That doth presume no more than to supply  
 A grace the sinuous vale and roaring  
 stream  
 Want, through neglect of hoar Antiquity.  
 Rise, then, ye votive Towers! and catch a  
 gleam  
 Of golden sunset, ere it fade and die.

1819.

## THE WILD DUCK'S NEST

I observed this beautiful nest on the largest  
 island of Rydal Water.

THE imperial Consort of the Fairy-king  
 Owns not a sylvan bower; or gorgeous cell  
 With emerald floored, and with purpureal  
 shell  
 Ceilinged and roofed; that is so fair a  
 thing  
 As this low structure, for the tasks of  
 Spring,  
 Prepared by one who loves the buoyant  
 swell  
 Of the brisk waves, yet here consents to  
 dwell;  
 And spreads in steadfast peace her brood-  
 ing wing.  
 Words cannot paint the o'ershadowing yew-  
 tree bough,  
 And dimly-gleaming Nest,—a hollow crown  
 Of golden leaves inlaid with silver down,  
 Fine as the mother's softest plumes allow:  
 I gazed—and, self-accused while gazing,  
 sighed  
 For human-kind, weak slaves of cumbrous  
 pride! 1819.

WRITTEN UPON A BLANK LEAF  
 IN "THE COMPLETE ANGLER."

WHILE flowing rivers yield a blameless sport,  
 Shall live the name of Walton: Sage  
 benign!  
 Whose pen, the mysteries of the rod and  
 line  
 Unfolding, did not fruitlessly exhort  
 To reverend watching of each still report  
 That Nature utters from her rural shrine.  
 Meek, nobly versed in simple discipline,  
 He found the longest summer day too  
 short,  
 To his loved pastime given by sedgy Lee.  
 Or down the tempting maze of Shawford  
 brook—  
 Fairer than life itself, in this sweet Book.  
 The cowslip-bank and shady willow-tree;  
 And the fresh meads—where flowed, from  
 every nook  
 Of his full bosom, gladsome Piety!

1819.

CAPTIVITY—MARY QUEEN OF  
SCOTS

“As the cold aspect of a sunless way  
Strikes through the Traveller's frame with  
deadlier chill,

Oft as appears a grove, or obvious hill,  
Glistening with unparticipated ray,  
Or shining slope where he must never stray;  
So joys, remembered without wish or will  
Sharpen the keenest edge of present ill,—  
On the crushed heart a heavier burthen lay.  
Just Heaven, contract the compass of my  
mind

To fit proportion with my altered state!  
Quench those felicities whose light I find  
Reflected in my bosom all too late!—  
O be my spirit, like my thralldom, strait;  
And, like mine eyes that stream with sorrow,  
blind!” 1819.

## TO A SNOWDROP

LONE Flower, hemmed in with snows and  
white as they

But harder far, once more I see thee bend  
Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,  
Like an unbidden guest. Though day by  
day,

Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops,  
waylay

The rising sun, and on the plains descend;  
Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend  
Whose zeal outruns his promise! Blue-eyed  
May

Shall soon behold this border thickly set  
With bright jonquils, their odours lavishing  
On the soft west-wind and his frolic peers;  
Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,  
Chaste Snowdrop, venturous harbinger of  
Spring,

And pensive monitor of fleeting years!  
1819.

ON SEEING A TUFT OF SNOW-  
DROPS IN A STORM

WHEN haughty expectations prostrate lie,  
And grandeur crouches like a guilty thing,  
Oft shall the lowly weak, till nature bring  
Mature release, in fair society  
Survive, and Fortune's utmost anger try;

Like these frail snowdrops that together  
cling,

And nod their helmets, smitten by the wing  
Of many a furious whirl-blast sweeping by.  
Observe the faithful flowers! if small to great  
May lead the thoughts, thus struggling used  
to stand

The Emathian phalanx, nobly obstinate;  
And so the bright immortal Theban band,  
Whom onset, fiercely urged at Jove's com-  
mand,

Might overwhelm, but could not separate!  
1819.

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE VAL-  
LEYS OF WESTMORELAND, ON  
EASTER SUNDAY

WITH each recurrence of this glorious morn  
That saw the Saviour in his human frame  
Rise from the dead, erewhile the Cottage-  
dame

Put on fresh raiment—till that hour un-  
worn:

Domestic hands the home-bred wool had  
shorn,  
And she who span it culled the daintiest  
fleece,

In thoughtful reverence to the Prince of  
Peace,  
Whose temples bled beneath the platted  
thorn.

A blest estate when piety sublime  
These humble props disdained not! O  
green dales!

Sad may I be who heard your sabbath  
chime

When Art's abused inventions were un-  
known;

Kind Nature's various wealth was all your  
own;

And benefits were weighed in Reason's  
scales! 1819.

“GRIEF, THOU HAST LOST AN  
EVER-READY FRIEND”

I could write a treatise of lamentation upon the  
changes brought about among the cottages of  
Westmoreland by the silence of the spinning-  
wheel. During long winter nights and wet days,  
the wheel upon which wool was spun gave em-  
ployment to a great part of a family. The old

man, however infirm, was able to card the wool, as he sate in the corner by the fireside; and often, when a boy, have I admired the cylinders of carded wool which were softly laid upon each other by his side. Two wheels were often at work on the same floor; and others of the family, chiefly little children, were occupied in teasing and cleaning the wool to fit it for the hand of the carder. So that all, except the smallest infants, were contributing to mutual support. Such was the employment that prevailed in the pastoral vales. Where wool was not at hand, in the small rural towns, the wheel for spinning flax was almost in as constant use, if knitting was not preferred; which latter occupation has the advantage (in some cases disadvantage) that, not being of necessity stationary, it allowed of gossiping about from house to house, which good housewives reckoned an idle thing.

GRIEF, thou hast lost an ever-ready friend  
Now that the cottage Spinning-wheel is  
mute;

And Care—a comforter that best could suit  
Her forward mood, and softliest reprehend;  
And Love—a charmer's voice, that used to  
lend,

More efficaciously than aught that flows  
From harp or lute, kind influence to com-  
pose

The throbbing pulse—else troubled without  
end:

Even Joy could tell, Joy craving truce and  
rest

From her own overflow, what power sedate  
On those revolving motions did await  
Assiduously—to soothe her aching breast;  
And, to a point of just relief, abate  
The mantling triumphs of a day too blest.

1819.

"I WATCH, AND LONG HAVE  
WATCHED, WITH CALM REGRET"

Suggested in front of Rydal Mount, the rocky  
parapet being the summit of Loughrigg Fell  
opposite. Not once only, but a hundred times,  
have the feelings of this Sonnet been awakened  
by the same objects seen from the same place.

I WATCH, and long have watched, with  
calm regret

Yon slowly-sinking star—immortal Sire  
(So might he seem) of all the glittering  
quire!

Blue ether still surrounds him—yet—and  
yet;

But now the horizon's rocky parapet  
Is reached, where, forfeiting his bright  
attire,

He burns—transmuted to a dusky fire—  
Then pays submissively the appointed debt  
To the flying moments, and is seen no  
more.

Angels and gods! We struggle with our  
fate,

While health, power, glory, from their  
height decline,

Depressed; and then extinguished; and  
our state,

In this, how different, lost Star, from thine,  
That no to-morrow shall our beams restore!

1819.

"I HEARD (ALAS! 'T'WAS ONLY  
IN A DREAM)"

I HEARD (alas! 'twas only in a dream)  
Strains—which, as sage Antiquity believed,  
By waking ears have sometimes been re-  
ceived

Wafted adown the wind from lake or  
stream;

A most melodious requiem, a supreme  
And perfect harmony of notes, achieved  
By a fair Swan on drowsy billows heaved,  
O'er which her pinions shed a silver gleam.  
For is she not the votary of Apollo?

And knows she not, singing as he inspires,  
That bliss awaits her which the ungenial  
Hollow<sup>1</sup>

Of the dull earth partakes not, nor desires?  
Mount, tuneful Bird, and join the immortal  
quires!

She soared—and I awoke, struggling in  
vain to follow.

1819.

## THE HAUNTED TREE

TO ———

This tree grew in the park of Rydal, and I  
have often listened to its creaking as described.

THOSE silver clouds collected round the sun  
His mid-day warmth abate not, seeming  
less

<sup>1</sup> See the Phædon of Plato, by which this  
Sonnet was suggested.

To overshadow than multiply his beams  
By soft reflection—grateful to the sky,  
To rocks, fields, woods. Nor doth our  
human sense

Ask, for its pleasure, screen or canopy  
More ample than the time-dismantled Oak  
Spreads o'er this tuft of heath, which now,  
attired

In the whole fulness of its bloom, affords  
Couch beautiful as e'er for earthly use  
Was fashioned; whether, by the hand of  
Art,

That eastern Sultan, amid flowers en-  
wrought

On silken tissue, might diffuse his limbs  
In languor; or, by Nature, for repose  
Of panting Wood-nymph, wearied with the  
chase.

O Lady! fairer in thy Poet's sight  
Than fairest spiritual creature of the groves,  
Approach;—and, thus invited, crown with  
rest

The noon-tide hour: though truly some  
there are

Whose footsteps superstitiously avoid  
This venerable Tree; for, when the wind  
Blows keenly, it sends forth a creaking  
sound

(Above the general roar of woods and  
crags)

Distinctly heard from far—a doleful note!  
As if (so Grecian shepherds would have  
deemed)

The Hamadryad, pent within, bewailed  
Some bitter wrong. Nor is it unbeliev'd,  
By ruder fancy, that a troubled ghost  
Haunts the old trunk; lamenting deeds of  
which

The flowery ground is conscious. But no  
wind

Sweeps now along this elevated ridge;  
Not even a zephyr stirs;—the obnoxious  
Tree

Is mute; and, in his silence, would look  
down,

O lovely Wanderer of the trackless hills,  
On thy reclining form with more delight  
Than his coevals in the sheltered vale  
Seem to participate, the while they view  
Their own far-stretching arms and leafy  
heads

Vividly pictured in some glassy pool,  
That, for a brief space, checks the hurrying  
stream!

1819.

## SEPTEMBER 1819

THE sylvan slopes with corn-clad fields  
Are hung, as if with golden shields,  
Bright trophies of the sun!  
Like a fair sister of the sky,  
Unruffled doth the blue lake lie,  
The mountains looking on.

And, sooth to say, yon vocal grove,  
Albeit uninspired by love,  
By love untaught to ring,  
May well afford to mortal ear  
An impulse more profoundly dear  
Than music of the Spring.

For *that* from turbulence and heat  
Proceeds, from some uneasy seat  
In nature's struggling frame,  
Some region of impatient life:  
And jealousy, and quivering strife,  
Therein a portion claim.

This, this is holy;—while I hear  
These vespers of another year,  
This hymn of thanks and praise,  
My spirit seems to mount above  
The anxieties of human love,  
And earth's precarious days.

But list!—though winter storms be nigh,  
Unchecked is that soft harmony:  
There lives Who can provide  
For all his creatures; and in Him,  
Even like the radiant Seraphim,  
These choristers confide.

## UPON THE SAME OCCASION

DEPARTING summer hath assumed  
An aspect tenderly illumed,  
The gentlest look of spring;  
That calls from yonder leafy shade  
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,  
A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,  
Such tribute as to winter chill  
The lonely redbreast pays!  
Clear, loud, and lively is the din,  
From social warblers gathering in  
Their harvest of sweet lays.

Nor doth the example fail to cheer  
 Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,  
 And yellow on the bough :—  
 Fall, rosy garlands, from my head !  
 Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed  
 Around a younger brow !

Yet will I temperately rejoice ;  
 Wide is the range, and free the choice  
 Of undiscordant themes ;  
 Which, haply, kindred souls may prize  
 Not less than vernal ecstasies,  
 And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,  
 And they like Demi-gods are strong  
 On whom the Muses smile ;  
 But some their function have disclaimed,  
 Best pleased with what is aptliest framed  
 To enervate and defile.

Not such the initiatory strains  
 Committed to the silent plains  
 In Britain's earliest dawn :  
 Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,  
 While all-too-daringly the veil  
 Of nature was withdrawn !

Nor such the spirit-stirring note  
 When the live chords Alcæus smote,  
 Inflamed by sense of wrong ;  
 Woe ! woe to Tyrants ! from the lyre  
 Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire  
 Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page  
 By winged Love inscribed, to assuage  
 The pangs of vain pursuit ;  
 Love listening while the Lesbian Maid  
 With finest touch of passion swayed  
 Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore  
 The wreck of Herculean lore,  
 What rapture ! could ye seize  
 Some Theban fragment, or unroll  
 One precious, tender-hearted, scroll  
 Of pure Simonides.

That were, indeed, a genuine birth  
 Of poesy ; a bursting forth  
 Of genius from the dust :  
 What Horace gloried to behold,  
 What Maro loved, shall we enfold ?  
 Can haughty Time be just ! 1819.

## "THERE IS A LITTLE UNPRE- TENDING RILL"

This Rill trickles down the hill-side into Windermere, near Lowwood. My sister and I, on our first visit together to this part of the country, walked from Kendal, and we rested to refresh ourselves by the side of the lake where the streamlet falls into it. This sonnet was written some years after in recollection of that happy ramble, that most happy day and hour.

THERE is a little unpretending Rill  
 Of limpid water, humbler far than aught  
 That ever among Men or Naiads sought  
 Notice or name !—It quivers down the  
 hill,  
 Furrowing its shallow way with dubious  
 will ;  
 Yet to my mind this scanty Stream is  
 brought  
 Oftener than Ganges or the Nile ; a thought  
 Of private recollection sweet and still !  
 Months perish with their moons ; year  
 treads on year !  
 But, faithful Emma ! thou with me canst  
 say  
 That, while ten thousand pleasures dis-  
 appear,  
 And flies their memory fast almost as they ;  
 The immortal Spirit of one happy day  
 Lingers beside that Rill, in vision clear.

1820.

## COMPOSED ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY STREAM

DOGMATIC Teachers, of the snow-white  
 fur !  
 Ye wrangling Schoolmen, of the scarlet  
 hood !  
 Who, with a keenness not to be withstood,  
 Press the point home, or falter and demur,  
 Checked in your course by many a teasing  
 burr ;  
 These natural council-seats your acrid blood  
 Might cool ;—and, as the Genius of the  
 flood  
 Stoops willingly to animate and spur  
 Each lighter function slumbering in the  
 brain,  
 Yon eddying balls of foam, these arrowy  
 gleams

That o'er the pavement of the surging  
streams

Welter and flash, a synod might detain  
With subtle speculations, haply vain,  
But surely less so than your far-fetched  
themes ! 1820.

# ON THE DEATH OF HIS MAJESTY (GEORGE THE THIRD)

WARD of the LAW!—dread Shadow of a  
King !

Whose realm had dwindled to one stately  
room ;

Whose universe was gloom immersed in  
gloom,

Darkness as thick as life o'er life could fling,  
Save haply for some feeble glimmering  
Of Faith and Hope—if thou, by nature's  
doom,

Gently hast sunk into the quiet tomb,  
Why should we bend in grief, to sorrow  
cling,

When thankfulness were best?—Fresh-  
flowing tears,

Or, where tears flow not, sigh succeeding  
sigh,

Yield to such after-thought the sole reply  
Which justly it can claim. The Nation  
hears

In this deep knell, silent for threescore years,  
An unexampled voice of awful memory !  
1820.

## "THE STARS ARE MANSIONS BUILT BY NATURE'S HAND"

THE stars are mansions built by Nature's  
hand,

And, haply, there the spirits of the blest  
Dwell, clothed in radiance, their immortal  
vest ;

Huge Ocean shows, within his yellow  
strand,

A habitation marvellously planned,  
For life to occupy in love and rest ;  
All that we see—is dome, or vault, or nest,  
Or fortress, reared at Nature's sage com-  
mand.

Glad thought for every season ! but the  
Spring

Gave it while cares were weighing on my  
heart,

'Mid song of birds, and insects murmuring ;  
And while the youthful year's prolific art—  
Of bud, leaf, blade, and flower—was  
fashioning

Abodes where self-disturbance hath no part.  
1820.

# TO THE LADY MARY LOWTHER

With a selection from the Poems of Anne,  
Countess of Winchilsea ; and extracts of similar  
character from other Writers ; transcribed by a  
female friend.

LADY ! I rifled a Parnassian Cave  
(But seldom trod) of mildly-gleaming ore ;  
And culled, from sundry beds, a lucid store  
Of genuine crystals, pure as those that pave  
The azure brooks, where Dian joys to lave  
Her spotless limbs ; and ventured to explore  
Dim shades—for reliques, upon Lethe's  
shore,

Cast up at random by the sullen wave.  
To female hands the treasures were re-  
signed ;

And lo this Work !—a grotto bright and  
clear

From stain or taint ; in which thy blameless  
mind

May feed on thoughts though pensive not  
austere ;

Or, if thy deeper spirit be inclined  
To holy musing, it may enter her  
1820.

## ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED THE PUBLICATION OF A CERTAIN POEM

See Milton's Sonnet, beginning, "A Book was  
writ of late called 'Tetrachordon.'"

A BOOK came forth of late, called PETER  
BELL ;

Not negligent the style ;—the matter?—  
good

As aught that song records of Robin Hood ;  
Or Roy, renowned through many a Scottish  
dell ;

But some (who brook those hackneyed  
themes full well,



Nor heat, at Tam o' Shanter's name, their  
blood)  
Waxed wroth, and with foul claws, a harpy  
brood,  
On Bard and Hero clamorously fell,  
Heed not, wild Rover once through heath  
and glen,  
Who mad'st at length the better life thy  
choice,  
Heed not such onset ! nay, if praise of men  
To thee appear not an unmeaning voice,  
Lift up that grey-haired forehead, and  
rejoice  
In the just tribute of thy Poet's pen !  
1820.

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820

Ye sacred Nurseries of blooming Youth !  
In whose collegiate shelter England's  
Flowers  
Expand, enjoying through their vernal  
hours  
The air of liberty, the light of truth ;  
Much have ye suffered from Time's gnaw-  
ing tooth :  
Yet, O ye spires of Oxford ! domes and  
towers !  
Gardens and groves ! your presence over-  
powers  
The soberness of reason ; till, in sooth,  
Transformed, and rushing on a bold ex-  
change,  
I slight my own beloved Cam, to range  
Where silver Isis leads my stripling feet ;  
Pace the long avenue, or glide adown  
The stream-like windings of that glorious  
street—  
An eager Novice robed in fluttering gown !

OXFORD, MAY 30, 1820

SHAME on this faithless heart ! that could  
allow  
Such transport, though but for a moment's  
space ;  
Not while—to aid the spirit of the place—  
The crescent moon clove with its glittering  
prow  
The clouds, or night-bird sang from shady  
bough ;  
But in plain daylight :—She, too, at my side,  
Who, with her heart's experience satisfied,

Maintains inviolate its slightest vow !  
Sweet Fancy ! other gifts must I receive ;  
Proofs of a higher sovereignty I claim ;  
Take from *her* brow the withering flowers  
of eve,  
And to that brow life's morning wreath  
restore ;  
Let *her* be comprehended in the frame  
Of these illusions, or they please no more.

JUNE 1820

FAME tells of groves—from England far  
away—  
1 Groves that inspire the Nightingale to  
trill  
And modulate, with subtle reach of skill  
Elsewhere unmatched, her ever-varying lay ;  
Such bold report I venture to gainsay :  
For I have heard the quire of Richmond  
hill  
Chanting, with indefatigable bill,  
Strains that recalled to mind a distant day ;  
When, haply under shade of that same  
wood,  
And scarcely conscious of the dashing oars  
Plied steadily between those willowy shores,  
The sweet-souled Poet of the Seasons  
stood—  
Listening, and listening long, in rapturous  
mood,  
Ye heavenly Birds ! to your Progenitors.

## MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT

1820

I set out in company with my Wife and Sister,  
and Mr. and Mrs. Monkhouse, then just married,  
and Miss Horrocks. These two ladies, sisters,  
we left at Berne, while Mr. Monkhouse took the  
opportunity of making an excursion with us  
among the Alps as far as Milan. Mr. H. C.  
Robinson joined us at Lucerne, and when this  
ramble was completed we rejoined at Geneva the  
two ladies we had left at Berne and proceeded to  
Paris, where Mr. Monkhouse and H. C. R. left  
us, and where we spent five weeks, of which  
there is not a record in these poems.

1 Wallachia is the country alluded to.

## DEDICATION

(SENT WITH THESE POEMS, IN MS.,  
TO ———)

DEAR Fellow-travellers ! think not that the Muse,  
To You presenting these memorial Lays,  
Can hope the general eye thereon would gaze,  
As on a mirror that gives back the hues  
Of living Nature ; no—though free to choose  
The greenest bowers, the most inviting ways,  
The fairest landscapes and the brightest days—  
Her skill she tried with less ambitious views.  
For You she wrought : Ye only can supply  
The life, the truth, the beauty : she confides  
In that enjoyment which with You abides,  
Trusts to your love and vivid memory ;  
Thus far contented, that for You her verse  
Shall lack not power the "meeting soul to pierce!"

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, Nov. 1821.

## I

FISH-WOMEN—ON LANDING AT  
CALAIS

'Tis said, fantastic ocean doth enfold  
The likeness of whate'er on land is seen ;  
But, if the Nereid Sisters and their Queen,  
Above whose heads the tide so long hath  
    rolled,  
The Dames resemble whom we here behold,  
How fearful were it down through opening  
    waves  
To sink, and meet them in their fretted  
    caves,  
Withered, grotesque, immeasurably old,  
And shrill and fierce in accent !—Fear it  
    not :  
For they Earth's fairest daughters do excel ;  
Pure undecaying beauty is their lot ;  
Their voices into liquid music swell,  
Thrilling each pearly cleft and sparry grot,  
The undisturbed abodes where Sea-nymphs  
    dwell !<sup>1</sup>

## II

BRUGÈS<sup>1</sup>

BRUGÈS I saw attired with golden light  
(Streamed from the west) as with a robe of  
    power :  
The splendour fled ; and now the sunless  
    hour,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

That, slowly making way for peaceful  
    night,  
Best suits with fallen grandeur, to my sight  
Offers the beauty, the magnificence,  
And sober graces, left her for defence  
Against the injuries of time, the spite  
Of fortune, and the desolating storms  
Of future war. Advance not—spare to  
    hide,  
O gentle Power of darkness ! these mild  
    hues ;  
Obscure not yet these silent avenues  
Of stateliest architecture, where the Forms  
Of nun-like females, with soft motion,  
    glide !

## III

## BRUGÈS

THE Spirit of Antiquity—enshrined  
In sumptuous buildings, vocal in sweet  
    song,  
In picture, speaking with heroic tongue,  
And with devout solemnities entwined—  
Mounts to the seat of grace within the  
    mind :  
Hence Forms that glide with swan-like ease  
    along,  
Hence motions, even amid the vulgar  
    through,  
To an harmonious decency confined :  
As if the streets were consecrated ground,  
The city one vast temple, dedicate  
To mutual respect in thought and deed ;  
To leisure, to forbearances sedate ;  
To social cares from jarring passions  
    freed ;  
A deeper peace than that in deserts found !

## IV

AFTER VISITING THE FIELD OF  
WATERLOO

A WINGÈD Goddess—clothed in vesture  
    wrought  
Of rainbow colours ; One whose port was  
    bold,  
Whose overburthened hand could scarcely  
    hold  
The glittering crowns and garlands which it  
    brought—  
Hovered in air above the far-famed Spot.  
She vanished ; leaving prospect blank and  
    cold

Of wind-swept corn that wide around us  
 rolled  
 In dreary billows; wood, and meagre cot,  
 And monuments that soon must disappear:  
 Yet a dread local recompence we found;  
 While glory seemed betrayed, while patriot-  
 zeal  
 Sank in our hearts, we felt as men *should*  
 feel  
 With such vast hoards of hidden carnage  
 near,  
 And horror breathing from the silent  
 ground!

## v

## BETWEEN NAMUR AND LIEGE

The scenery on the Meuse pleases me more, upon the whole, than that of the Rhine, though the river itself is much inferior in grandeur. The rocks both in form and colour, especially between Namur and Liege, surpass any upon the Rhine, though they are in several places disfigured by quarries, whence stones were taken for the new fortifications. This is much to be regretted, for they are useless, and the scars will remain perhaps for thousands of years. A like injury to a still greater degree has been inflicted, in my memory, upon the beautiful rocks of Clifton on the banks of the Avon. There is probably in existence a very long letter of mine to Sir Uvedale Price, in which was given a description of the landscapes on the Meuse as compared with those on the Rhine.

Details in the spirit of these sonnets are given both in Mrs. Wordsworth's Journals and my Sister's, and the re-perusal of them has strengthened a wish long entertained that somebody would put together, as in one work, the notices contained in them, omitting particulars that were written down merely to aid our memory, and bringing the whole into as small a compass as is consistent with the general interests belonging to the scenes, circumstances, and objects touched on by each writer.

WHAT lovelier home could gentle Fancy  
 choose?  
 Is this the stream, whose cities, heights,  
 and plains,  
 War's favourite playground, are with crimson  
 stains  
 Familiar, as the Morn with pearly dew?  
 The Morn, that now, along the silver  
 MEUSE,

Spreading her peaceful ensigns, calls the  
 swains  
 To tend their silent boats and ringing  
 wains,  
 Or strip the bough whose mellow fruit  
 bestrews  
 The ripening corn beneath it. As mine  
 eyes  
 Turn from the fortified and threatening  
 hill,  
 How sweet the prospect of yon watery  
 glade,  
 With its grey rocks clustering in pensive  
 shade—  
 That, shaped like old monastic turrets, rise  
 From the smooth meadow-ground, serene  
 and still!

## vi

## AIX-LA-CHAPELLE

WAS it to disenchant, and to undo,  
 That we approached the Seat of Charle-  
 maine?  
 To sweep from many an old romantic  
 strain  
 That faith which no devotion may renew!  
 Why does this puny Church present to  
 view  
 Her feeble columns? and that scanty chair!  
 This sword that one of our weak times  
 might wear!  
 Objects of false pretence, or meanly true!  
 If from a traveller's fortune I might claim  
 A palpable memorial of that day,  
 Then would I seek the Pyrenean Breach  
 That ROLAND clove with huge two-handed  
 sway,  
 And to the enormous labour left his name,  
 Where unremitting frosts the rocky crescent  
 bleach.<sup>1</sup>

## vii

## IN THE CATHEDRAL AT COLOGNE

O FOR the help of Angels to complete  
 This Temple—Angels governed by a plan  
 Thus far pursued (how gloriously!) by  
 Man,  
 Studious that HE might not disdain the  
 seat  
 Who dwells in heaven! But that aspiring  
 heat

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Hath failed; and now, ye Powers! whose  
gorgeous wings  
And splendid aspect yon emblazonings  
But faintly picture, 'twere an office meet  
For you, on these unfinished shafts to try  
The midnight virtues of your harmony:—  
This vast design might tempt you to repeat  
Strains that call forth upon empyreal  
ground  
Immortal Fabrics, rising to the sound  
Of penetrating harps and voices sweet!

## VIII

IN A CARRIAGE, UPON THE BANKS  
OF THE RHINE

AMID this dance of objects sadness steals  
O'er the defrauded heart—while sweeping  
by,  
As in a fit of Thespian jollity,  
Beneath her vine-leaf crown the green  
Earth reels:  
Backward, in rapid evanescence, wheels  
The venerable pageantry of Time,  
Each beetling rampart, and each tower  
sublime,  
And what the Dell unwillingly reveals  
Of lurking cloistral arch, through trees  
espied  
Near the bright River's edge. Yet why  
repine?  
To muse, to creep, to halt at will, to gaze—  
Such sweet wayfaring—of life's spring the  
pride,  
Her summer's faithful joy—*that* still is  
mine,  
And in fit measure cheers autumnal days.

## IX

## HYMN

FOR THE BOATMEN, AS THEY APPROACH  
THE RAPIDS UNDER THE CASTLE OF  
HEIDELBERG

JESU! bless our slender Boat,  
By the current swept along;  
Loud its threatenings—let them not  
Drown the music of a song

Breathed thy mercy to implore,  
Where these troubled waters roar!

Saviour, for our warning, seen  
Bleeding on that precious Rood;  
If, while through the meadows green  
Gently wound the peaceful flood,  
We forgot Thee, do not Thou  
Disregard thy Suppliants now!

Hither, like yon ancient Tower  
Watching o'er the River's bed,  
Fling the shadow of thy power,  
Else we sleep among the dead;  
Thou who trod'st the billowy sea,  
Shield us in our jeopardy!

Guide our Bark among the waves;  
Through the rocks our passage smooth;  
Where the whirlpool frets and raves  
Let thy love its anger soothe:  
All our hope is placed in Thee;  
*Miserere Domine!*<sup>1</sup>

## X

## THE SOURCE OF THE DANUBE

NOT, like his great Compeers, indignantly  
Doth DANUBE spring to life!<sup>1</sup> The wander-  
ing Stream  
(Who loves the Cross, yet to the Crescent's  
gleam  
Unfolds a willing breast) with infant glee  
Slips from his prison walls: and Fancy,  
free  
To follow in his track of silver light,  
Mounts on rapt wing, and with a moment's  
flight  
Hath reached the encincture of that gloomy  
sea  
Whose waves the Orphean lyre forbade to  
meet  
In conflict; whose rough winds forgot  
their jars  
To waft the heroic progeny of Greece;  
When the first Ship sailed for the Golden  
Fleece—  
ARGO—exalted for that daring feat  
To fix in heaven her shape distinct with  
stars.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XI

ON APPROACHING THE STAUB-BACH,  
LAUTERBRUNNEN

UTTERED by whom, or how inspired—  
designed

For what strange service, does this concert  
reach

Our ears, and near the dwellings of man-  
kind!

'Mid fields familiar to human speech?—  
No Mermaid's warble—to allay the wind  
Driving some vessel toward a dangerous  
beach—

More thrilling melodies; Witch answering  
Witch,

To chant a love-spell, never intertwined  
Notes shrill and wild with art more musi-  
cal:

Alas! that from the lips of abject Want  
Or Idleness in tatters mendicant

The strain should flow—free Fancy to en-  
thral,

And with regret and useless pity haunt  
This bold, this bright, this sky-born,

WATERFALL!<sup>1</sup>

## XII

## THE FALL OF THE AAR—HANDEC

FROM the fierce aspect of this River,  
throwing

His giant body o'er the steep rock's brink,  
Back in astonishment and fear we shrink:

But, gradually a calmer look bestowing,  
Flowers we espy beside the torrent grow-  
ing;

Flowers that peep forth from many a cleft  
and chink,

And, from the whirlwind of his anger,  
drink

Hues ever fresh, in rocky fortress blowing:  
They suck—from breath that, threatening  
to destroy,

Is more benignant than the dewy eve—  
Beauty, and life, and motions as of joy:

Nor doubt but HE to whom yon Pine-trees  
nod

Their heads in sign of worship, Nature's  
God,

These humbler adorations will receive.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XIII

## MEMORIAL

NEAR THE OUTLET OF THE LAKE OF  
THUN

"*DEM  
ANDENKEN  
MEINES FREUNDES  
ALOYS REDING  
MDCCCXVIII.*"

Aloys Reding, it will be remembered, was  
Captain-General of the Swiss forces, which, with  
a courage and perseverance worthy of the cause,  
opposed the flagitious and too successful attempt  
of Buonaparte to subjugate their country.

AROUND a wild and woody hill  
A gravelled pathway treading,  
We reached a votive Stone that bears  
The name of Aloys Reding.

Well judged the Friend who placed it there  
For silence and protection;  
And haply with a finer care  
Of dutiful affection.

The Sun regards it from the West;  
And, while in summer glory  
He sets, his sinking yields a type  
Of that pathetic story:

And oft he tempts the patriot Swiss  
Amid the grove to linger;  
Till all is dim, save this bright Stone  
Touched by his golden finger.

## XIV

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE CATHOLIC  
CANTONS

DOOMED as we are our native dust  
To wet with many a bitter shower,  
It ill befits us to disdain  
The altar, to deride the fane,  
Where simple Sufferers bend, in trust  
To win a happier hour.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,  
Upon some knee-worn cell to gaze:  
Hail to the firm unmoving cross,  
Aloft, where pines their branches toss!  
And to the chapel far withdrawn,  
That lurks by lonely ways!

Where'er we roam—along the brink  
Of Rhine—or by the sweeping Po,  
Through Alpine vale, or champain wide,  
Whate'er we look on, at our side  
Be Charity!—to bid us think,  
And feel, if we would know.

## XV

## AFTER-THOUGHT

O LIFE ! without thy chequered scene  
Of right and wrong, of weal and woe,  
Success and failure, could a ground  
For magnanimity be found;  
For faith, 'mid ruined hopes, serene?  
Or whence could virtue flow?

Pain entered through a ghastly breach—  
Nor while sin lasts must effort cease;  
Heaven upon earth's an empty boast;  
But, for the bowers of Eden lost,  
Mercy has placed within our reach  
A portion of God's peace.

## XVI

## SCENE ON THE LAKE OF BRIENTZ

"WHAT know we of the Blest above  
But that they sing and that they love?"  
Yet, if they ever did inspire  
A mortal hymn, or shaped the choir,  
Now, where those harvest Damsels float  
Homeward in their rugged Boat,  
(While all the ruffling winds are fled—  
Each slumbering on some mountain's head)  
Now, surely, hath that gracious aid  
Been felt, that influence is displayed.  
Pupils of Heaven, in order stand  
The rustic Maidens, every hand  
Upon a Sister's shoulder laid,—  
To chant, as glides the boat along,  
A simple, but a touching, song;  
To chant, as Angels do above,  
The melodies of Peace in love!

## XVII

ENGELBERG, THE HILL OF ANGELS<sup>1</sup>

FOR gentlest uses, oft-times Nature takes  
The work of Fancy from her willing hands;

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

And such a beautiful creation makes  
As renders needless spells and magic wands,  
And for the boldest tale belief commands.  
When first mine eyes beheld that famous  
Hill,

The sacred ENGELBERG, celestial Bands,  
With intermingling motions soft and still,  
Hung round its top, on wings that changed  
their hues at will.

Clouds do not name those Visitants; they  
were

The very Angels whose authentic lays,  
Sung from that heavenly ground in middle  
air,

Made known the spot where piety should  
raise

A holy Structure to the Almighty's praise.  
Resplendent Apparition! if in vain  
My ears did listen, 'twas enough to gaze;  
And watch the slow departure of the train,  
Whose skirts the glowing Mountain thirsted  
to detain.

## XVIII

## OUR LADY OF THE SNOW

MEEK Virgin Mother, more benign  
Than fairest Star, upon the height  
Of thy own mountain,<sup>2</sup> set to keep  
Lone vigils through the hours of sleep,  
What eye can look upon thy shrine  
Untroubled at the sight?

These crowded offerings as they hang  
In sign of misery relieved,  
Even these, without intent of theirs,  
Report of comfortless despairs,  
Of many a deep and cureless pang  
And confidence deceived.

To Thee, in this ærial cleft,  
As to a common centre, tend  
All sufferers that no more rely  
On mortal succour—all who sigh  
And pine, of human hope bereft,  
Nor wish for earthly friend.

And hence, O Virgin Mother mild!  
Though plenteous flowers around thee blow  
Not only from the dreary strife  
Of Winter, but the storms of life,

<sup>2</sup> Mount Righi.

Thee have thy Votaries aptly styled,  
OUR LADY OF THE SNOW.

Even for the Man who stops not here,  
But down the irriguous valley hies,  
Thy very name, O Lady ! flings,  
O'er blooming fields and gushing springs,  
A tender sense of shadowy fear,  
And chastening sympathies !

Nor falls that intermingling shade  
To summer-gladness unkind :  
It chastens only to requite  
With gleams of fresher, purer, light ;  
While, o'er the flower-enamelled glade,  
More sweetly breathes the wind.

But on !—a tempting downward way,  
A verdant path before us lies ;  
Clear shines the glorious sun above ;  
Then give free course to joy and love,  
Deeming the evil of the day  
Sufficient for the wise.

### XIX

#### EFFUSION

IN PRESENCE OF THE PAINTED TOWER OF  
TELL, AT ALTORF

This Tower stands upon the spot where grew  
the Linden Tree against which his Son is said to  
have been placed, when the Father's archery was  
put to proof under circumstances so famous in  
Swiss Story.

WHAT though the Italian pencil wrought  
not here,  
Nor such fine skill as did the meed bestow  
On Marathonian valour, yet the tear  
Springs forth in presence of this gaudy show,  
While narrow cares their limits overflow.  
Thrice happy, burghers, peasants, warriors  
old,  
Infants in arms, and ye, that as ye go  
Homeward or schoolward, ape what ye  
behold !  
Heroes before your time, in frolic fancy  
bold !

And when that calm Spectatress from on  
high  
Looks down—the bright and solitary Moon,  
Who never gazes but to beautify ;

And snow-fed torrents, which the blaze of  
noon  
Roused into fury, murmur a soft tune  
That fosters peace, and gentleness recalls ;  
Then might the passing Monk receive a  
boon  
Of saintly pleasure from these pictured  
walls,  
While, on the warlike groups, the mellow-  
ing lustre falls.

How blest the souls who when their trials  
come  
Yield not to terror or despondency,  
But face like that sweet Boy their mortal  
doom,  
Whose head the ruddy apple tops, while he  
Expectant stands beneath the linden tree :  
He quakes not like the timid forest game,  
But smiles—the hesitating shaft to free ;  
Assured that Heaven its justice will proclaim,  
And to his Father give its own unerring aim.

### XX

#### THE TOWN OF SCHWYTZ

By antique Fancy trimmed—though lowly,  
bred  
To dignity—in thee, O SCHWYTZ ! are seen  
The genuine features of the golden mean ;  
Equality by Prudence governed,  
Or jealous Nature ruling in her stead ;  
And, therefore, art thou blest with peace,  
serene  
As that of the sweet fields and meadows  
green  
In unambitious compass round thee spread.  
Majestic BERNE, high on her guardian  
steep,  
Holding a central station of command,  
Might well be styled this noble body's  
HEAD ;  
Thou, lodged 'mid mountainous entrench-  
ments deep,  
Its HEART ; and ever may the heroic Land  
Thy name, O SCHWYTZ, in happy freedom  
keep !<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nearly 500 years (says Ebel, speaking of the French Invasion) had elapsed, when, for the first time, foreign soldiers were seen upon the frontiers of this small Canton, to impose upon it the laws of their governors.

## XXI

ON HEARING THE "RANZ DES  
VACHES" ON THE TOP OF THE  
PASS OF ST. GOTHARD

I LISTEN—but no faculty of mine  
 Avails those modulations to detect,  
 Which, heard in foreign lands, the Swiss  
 affect  
 With tenderest passion; leaving him to  
 pine  
 (So fame reports) and die,—his sweet-  
 breathed kine  
 Remembering, and green Alpine pastures  
 decked  
 With vernal flowers. Yet may we not reject  
 The tale as fabulous.—Here while I recline,  
 Mindful how others by this simple Strain  
 Are moved, for me—upon this Mountain  
 named  
 Of God himself from dread pre-eminence—  
 Aspiring thoughts, by memory reclaimed,  
 Yield to the Music's touching influence;  
 And joys of distant home my heart enchain.

## XXII

## FORT FUENTES

The Ruins of Fort Fuentes form the crest of a rocky eminence that rises from the plain at the head of the Lake of Como, commanding views up the Valteline, and toward the town of Chiavenna. The prospect in the latter direction is characterised by melancholy sublimity. We rejoiced at being favoured with a distinct view of those Alpine heights; not, as we had expected from the breaking up of the storm, steeped in celestial glory, yet in communion with clouds floating or stationary—scatterings from heaven. The Ruin is interesting both in mass and in detail. An Inscription, upon elaborately sculptured marble lying on the ground, records that the Fort had been erected by Count Fuentes in the year 1600, during the reign of Philip the Third; and the Chapel, about twenty years after, by one of his Descendants. Marble pillars of gateways are yet standing, and a considerable part of the Chapel walls: a smooth green turf has taken place of the pavement, and we could see no trace of altar or image; but everywhere something to remind one of former splendour, and of devastation and tumult. In our ascent we had passed abundance of wild vines intermingled with bushes: near the ruins were some ill tended, but

growing willingly; and rock, turf, and fragments of the pile, are alike covered or adorned with a variety of flowers, among which the rose-coloured pink was growing in great beauty. While descending, we discovered on the ground, apart from the path, and at a considerable distance from the ruined Chapel, a statue of a Child in pure white marble, uninjured by the explosion that had driven it so far down the hill. "How little," we exclaimed, "are these things valued here! Could we but transport this pretty Image to our own garden!"—Yet it seemed it would have been a pity any one should remove it from its couch in the wilderness, which may be its own for hundreds of years.—*Extract from Journal.*

DREAD hour! when, upheaved by war's  
 sulphurous blast,  
 This sweet-visaged Cherub of Parian  
 stone  
 So far from the holy enclosure was cast,  
 To couch in this thicket of brambles  
 alone,

To rest where the lizard may bask in the  
 palm  
 Of his half-open hand pure from blemish  
 or speck;  
 And the green, gilded snake, without  
 troubling the calm  
 Of the beautiful countenance, twine  
 round his neck;

Where haply (kind service to Piety due!)  
 When winter the grove of its mantle  
 bereaves,  
 Some bird (like our own honoured red-  
 breast) may strew  
 The desolate Slumberer with moss and  
 with leaves.

FUENTES once harboured the good and the  
 brave,  
 Nor to her was the dance of soft pleasure  
 unknown;  
 Her banners for festal enjoyment did wave  
 While the thrill of her fifes thro' the  
 mountains was blown:

Now gads the wild vine o'er the pathless  
 ascent;—  
 O silence of Nature, how deep is thy sway,  
 When the whirlwind of human destruction  
 is spent,  
 Our tumults appeased, and our strifes  
 passed away!



## XXIII

THE CHURCH OF SAN SALVADOR  
SEEN FROM THE LAKE OF LUGANO

This Church was almost destroyed by lightning a few years ago, but the altar and the image of the Patron Saint were untouched. The Mount, upon the summit of which the Church is built, stands amid the intricacies of the Lake of Lugano; and is, from a hundred points of view, its principal ornament, rising to the height of 2000 feet, and on one side nearly perpendicular. The ascent is toilsome; but the traveller who performs it will be amply rewarded. Splendid fertility, rich woods and dazzling waters, seclusion and confinement of view contrasted with sealike extent of plain fading into the sky; and this again, in an opposite quarter, with an horizon of the loftiest and boldest Alps—unite in composing a prospect more diversified by magnificence, beauty, and sublimity, than perhaps any other point in Europe, of so inconsiderable an elevation, commands.

THOU sacred Pile! whose turrets rise  
From yon steep mountain's loftiest stage,  
Guarded by lone San Salvador;  
Sink (if thou must) as heretofore,  
To sulphurous bolts a sacrifice,  
But ne'er to human rage!

On Horeb's top, on Sinai, deigned  
To rest the universal Lord:  
Why leap the fountains from their cells  
Where everlasting Bounty dwells?—  
That, while the Creature is sustained,  
His God may be adored.

Cliffs, fountains, rivers, seasons, times—  
Let all remind the soul of heaven;  
Our slack devotion needs them all;  
And Faith—so oft of sense the thrall,  
While she, by aid of Nature, climbs—  
May hope to be forgiven.

Glory, and patriotic Love,  
And all the Poms of this frail "spot  
Which men call Earth," have yearned to  
seek,  
Associate with the simply meek,  
Religion in the sainted grove,  
And in the hallowed grot.

Thither, in time of adverse shocks,  
Of fainting hopes and backward wills,

Did mighty Tell repair of old—  
A Hero cast in Nature's mould,  
Deliverer of the steadfast rocks  
And of the ancient hills!

*He*, too, of battle-martyrs chief!  
Who, to recall his daunted peers,  
For victory shaped an open space,  
By gathering with a wide embrace,  
Into his single breast, a sheaf  
Of fatal Austrian spears.<sup>1</sup>

## XXIV

THE ITALIAN ITINERANT AND THE  
SWISS GOATHERD.

## PART I

## I

Now that the farewell tear is dried,  
Heaven prosper thee, be hope thy guide  
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;  
The wages of thy travel, joy!  
Whether for London bound—to trill  
Thy mountain notes with simple skill;  
Or on thy head to poise a show  
Of Images in seemly row;  
The graceful form of milk-white Steed,  
Or Bird that soared with Ganymede;  
Or through our hamlets thou wilt bear  
The sightless Milton, with his hair  
Around his placid temples curled;  
And Shakspeare at his side—a freight,  
If clay could think and mind were weight,  
For him who bore the world!  
Hope be thy guide, adventurous Boy;  
The wages of thy travel, joy!

## II

But thou, perhaps, (alert as free  
Though serving sage philosophy)  
Wilt ramble over hill and dale,  
A Vender of the well-wrought Scale,  
Whose sentient tube instructs to time  
A purpose to a fickle clime:  
Whether thou choose this useful part,  
Or minister to finer art,

<sup>1</sup> Arnold Winkelried, at the battle of Sempach, broke an Austrian phalanx in this manner. The event is one of the most famous in the annals of Swiss heroism; and pictures and prints of it are frequent throughout the country.

Though robbed of many a cherished dream,  
And crossed by many a shattered scheme,  
What stirring wonders wilt thou see  
In the proud Isle of liberty!  
Yet will the Wanderer sometimes pine  
With thoughts which no delights can chase,  
Recall a Sister's last embrace,  
His Mother's neck entwine;  
Nor shall forget the Maiden coy  
That *would* have loved the bright-haired  
Boy!

## III

My Song, encouraged by the grace  
That beams from his ingenuous face,  
For this Adventurer scruples not  
To prophesy a golden lot;  
Due recompence, and safe return  
To Como's steeps—his happy bourne!  
Where he, aloft in garden glade,  
Shall tend, with his own dark-eyed Maid,  
The towering maize, and prop the twig  
That ill supports the luscious fig;  
Or feed his eye in paths sun-proof  
With purple of the trellis-roof,  
That through the jealous leaves escapes  
From Cadenabbia's pendent grapes.  
—Oh might he tempt that Goatherd-child  
To share his wanderings! him whose look  
Even yet my heart can scarcely brook,  
So touchingly he smiled—  
As with a rapture caught from heaven—  
For unasked alms in pity given.

## PART II

## I

With nodding plumes, and lightly drest  
Like foresters in leaf-green vest,  
The Helvetian Mountaineers, on ground  
For Tell's dread archery renowned,  
Before the target stood—to claim  
The guerdon of the steadiest aim.  
Loud was the rifle-gun's report—  
A startling thunder quick and short!  
But, flying through the heights around,  
Echo prolonged a tell-tale sound  
Of hearts and hands alike "prepared  
The treasures they enjoy to guard!"  
And, if there be a favoured hour  
When Heroes are allowed to quit  
The tomb, and on the clouds to sit  
With tutelary power,

On their Descendants shedding grace—  
This was the hour, and that the place.

## II

But Truth inspired the Bards of old  
When of an iron age they told,  
Which to unequal laws gave birth,  
And drove Astræa from the earth.  
—A gentle Boy (perchance with blood  
As noble as the best endued,  
But seemingly a Thing despised;  
Even by the sun and air unpriized;  
For not a tinge or flowery streak  
Appeared upon his tender cheek)  
Heart-deaf to those rebounding notes,  
Apart, beside his silent goats,  
Sate watching in a forest shed,  
Pale, ragged, with bare feet and head;  
Mute as the snow upon the hill,  
And, as the saint he prays to, still.  
Ah, what avails heroic deed?  
What liberty? if no defence  
Be won for feeble Innocence.  
Father of all! though wilful Manhood read  
His punishment in soul-distress,  
Grant to the morn of life its natural blessed-  
ness!

## XXV

## THE LAST SUPPER

BY LEONARDO DA VINCI, IN THE REFEC-  
TORY OF THE CONVENT OF MARIA  
DELLA GRAZIA—MILAN<sup>1</sup>

THO' searching damp and many an envious  
flaw  
Have marred this Work; the calm ethereal  
grace,  
The love deep-seated in the Saviour's face,  
The mercy, goodness, have not failed to awe  
The Elements; as they do melt and thaw  
The heart of the Beholder—and erase  
(At least for one rapt moment) every trace  
Of disobedience to the primal law.  
The annunciation of the dreadful truth  
Made to the Twelve, survives: lip, forehead,  
cheek,  
And hand reposing on the board in ruth  
Of what it utters, while the unguilty seek  
Unquestionable meanings—still bespeak  
A labour worthy of eternal youth!

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XXVI

## THE ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, 1820

HIGH on her speculative tower  
 Stood Science waiting for the hour  
 When Sol was destined to endure  
*That* darkening of his radiant face  
 Which Superstition strove to chase,  
 Erewhile, with rites impure.

Afloat beneath Italian skies,  
 Through regions fair as Paradise  
 We gaily passed,—till Nature wrought  
 A silent and unlooked-for change,  
 That checked the desultory range  
 Of joy and sprightly thought.

Where'er was dipped the toiling oar,  
 The waves danced round us as before,  
 As lightly, though of altered hue,  
 'Mid recent coolness, such as falls  
 At noontide from umbrageous walls  
 That screen the morning dew.

No vapour stretched its wings; no cloud  
 Cast far or near a murky shroud;  
 The sky an azure field displayed;  
 'Twas sunlight sheathed and gently charmed.  
 Of all its sparkling rays disarmed,  
 And as in slumber laid,—

Or something night and day between,  
 Like moonshine—but the hue was green;  
 Still moonshine, without shadow, spread  
 On jutting rock, and curvèd shore,  
 Where gazed the peasant from his door  
 And on the mountain's head.

It tinged the Julian steeps—it lay,  
 Lugano! on thy ample bay;  
 The solemnizing veil was drawn  
 O'er villas, terraces, and towers;  
 To Albogasio's olive bowers,  
 Porlezza's verdant lawn.

But Fancy with the speed of fire  
 Hath passed to Milan's loftiest spire,  
 And there alights 'mid that aerial host  
 Of Figures human and divine,<sup>1</sup>  
 White as the snows of Apennine  
 Indurated by frost.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Awe-stricken she beholds the array  
 That guards the Temple night and day;  
 Angels she sees—that might from heaven  
     have flown,  
 And Virgin-saints, who not in vain  
 Have striven by purity to gain  
 The beatific crown—

Sees long-drawn files, concentric rings  
 Each narrowing above each;—the wings,  
 The uplifted palms, the silent marble lips  
 The starry zone of sovereign height<sup>2</sup>—  
 All steeped in this portentous light!  
 All suffering dim eclipse!

Thus after Man had fallen (if aught  
 These perishable spheres have wrought  
 May with that issue be compared)  
 Throngs of celestial visages,  
 Darkening like water in the breeze,  
 A holy sadness shared.

Lo! while I speak, the labouring Sun  
 His glad deliverance has begun:  
 The cypress waves her sombre plume  
 More cheerily; and town and tower,  
 The vineyard and the olive-bower,  
 Their lustre re-assume!

O Ye, who guard and grace my home  
 While in far-distant lands we roam,  
 What countenance hath this Day put on  
     for you?  
 While we looked round with favoured eyes,  
 Did sullen mists hide lake and skies  
 And mountains from your view?

Or was it given you to behold  
 Like vision, pensive though not cold,  
 From the smooth breast of gay Winander-  
     mere?  
 Saw ye the soft yet awful veil  
 Spread over Grasmere's lovely dale,  
 Helvellyn's brow severe?

I ask in vain—and know far less  
 If sickness, sorrow, or distress  
 Have spared my Dwelling to this hour;  
 Sad blindness! but ordained to prove  
 Our faith in Heaven's unfailing love  
 And all-controlling power.

<sup>2</sup> Above the highest circle of figures is a zone of metallic stars.

## XXVII

## THE THREE COTTAGE GIRLS

## I

How blest the Maid whose heart—yet free  
 From Love's uneasy sovereignty—  
 Beats with a fancy running high,  
 Her simple cares to magnify;  
 Whom Labour, never urged to toil,  
 Hath cherished on a healthful soil;  
 Who knows not pomp, who heeds not pelf;  
 Whose heaviest sin it is to look  
 Askance upon her pretty Self  
 Reflected in some crystal brook;  
 Whom grief hath spared—who sheds no tear  
 But in sweet pity; and can hear  
 Another's praise from envy clear.

## II

Such (but O lavish Nature! why  
 That dark unfathomable eye,  
 Where lurks a Spirit that replies  
 To stillest mood of softest skies,  
 Yet hints at peace to be o'erthrown,  
 Another's first, and then her own?)  
 Such, haply, yon ITALIAN Maid,  
 Our Lady's laggard Votaress,  
 Halting beneath the chestnut shade  
 To accomplish there her loveliness:  
 Nice aid maternal fingers lend;  
 A Sister serves with slacker hand;  
 Then, glittering like a star, she joins the  
 festal band.

## III

How blest (if truth may entertain  
 Coy fancy with a bolder strain)  
 The HELVETIAN Girl—who daily braves,  
 In her light skiff, the tossing waves,  
 And quits the bosom of the deep  
 Only to climb the rugged steep!  
 —Say whence that modulated shout!  
 From Wood-nymph of Diana's throng?  
 Or does the greeting to a rout  
 Of giddy Bacchanals belong?  
 Jubilant outcry! rock and glade  
 Resounded—but the voice obeyed  
 The breath of an Helvetic Maid.

## IV

Her beauty dazzles the thick wood;  
 Her courage animates the flood;

Her steps the elastic greensward meets  
 Returning reluctant sweets;  
 The mountains (as ye heard) rejoice  
 Aloud, saluted by her voice!  
 Blithe Paragon of Alpine grace,  
 Be as thou art—for through thy veins  
 The blood of Heroes runs its race!  
 And nobly wilt thou brook the chains  
 That, for the virtuous, Life prepares;  
 The fetters which the Matron wears;  
 The patriot Mother's weight of anxious  
 cares!

## V

1 "Sweet HIGHLAND Girl! a very shower  
 Of beauty was thy earthly dower,"  
 When thou didst flit before mine eyes,  
 Gay Vision under sullen skies,  
 While Hope and Love around thee played,  
 Near the rough falls of Inversneyd!  
 Have they, who nursed the blossom, seen  
 No breach of promise in the fruit?  
 Was joy, in following joy, as keen  
 As grief can be in grief's pursuit?  
 When youth had flown did hope still bless  
 Thy goings—or the cheerfulness  
 Of innocence survive to mitigate distress?

## VI

But from our course why turn—to tread  
 A way with shadows overspread;  
 Where what we gladliest would believe  
 Is feared as what may most deceive?  
 Bright Spirit, not with amaranth crowned  
 But heath-bells from thy native ground,  
 Time cannot thin thy flowing hair,  
 Nor take one ray of light from Thee;  
 For in my Fancy thou dost share  
 The gift of immortality;  
 And there shall bloom, with Thee allied,  
 The Votaress by Lugano's side;  
 And that intrepid Nymph, on Uri's steep  
 descried!

## XXVIII

THE COLUMN INTENDED BY BUONA-  
 PARTE FOR A TRIUMPHAL EDIFICE  
 IN MILAN, NOW LYING BY THE  
 WAY-SIDE IN THE SIMPLON PASS

AMBITION—following down this far-famed  
 slope

1 See address to a Highland Girl, p. 191.

Her Pioneer, the snow-dissolving Sun,  
While clarions prate of kingdoms to be  
won—

Perchance, in future ages, here may stop ;  
Taught to mistrust her flattering horoscope  
By admonition from this prostrate Stone !  
Memento uninscribed of Pride o'erthrown ;  
Vanity's hieroglyphic ; a choice trope  
In Fortune's rhetoric. Daughter of the  
Rock,

Rest where thy course was stayed by Power  
divine !

The Soul transported sees, from hint of  
thine,

Crimes which the great Avenger's hand  
provoke,

Hears combats whistling o'er the ensan-  
guined heath :

What groans ! what shrieks ! what quiet-  
ness in death.

## XXIX

## STANZAS

## COMPOSED IN THE SIMPLON PASS

VALLOMBROSA ! I longed in thy shadiest  
wood

To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered  
floor,

To listen to ANIO'S precipitous flood,  
When the stillness of evening hath deep-  
ened its roar ;

To range through the Temples of PÆSTUM,  
to muse

In POMPEII preserved by her burial in  
earth ;

On pictures to gaze where they drank in  
their hues ;

And murmur sweet songs on the ground of  
their birth.

The beauty of Florence, the grandeur of  
Rome,

Could I leave them unseen, and not yield  
to regret ?

With a hope (and no more) for a season to  
come,

Which ne'er may discharge the magnificent  
debt ?

Thou fortunate Region ! whose Greatness  
inured

Awoke to new life from its ashes and dust ;  
Twice-glorified fields ! if in sadness I turned  
From your infinite marvels, the sadness  
was just.

Now, risen ere the light-footed Chamois  
retires

From dew-sprinkled grass to heights  
guarded with snow,

Toward the mists that hang over the land  
of my Sires,

From the climate of myrtles contented I go.  
My thoughts become bright like yon edging  
of Pines

On the steep's lofty verge : how it blackened  
the air !

But, touched from behind by the Sun, it  
now shines

With threads that seem part of his own  
silver hair.

Though the toil of the way with dear  
Friends we divide,

Though by the same zephyr our temples  
be fanned

As we rest in the cool orange-bower side  
by side,

A yearning survives which few hearts shall  
withstand :

Each step hath its value while homeward  
we move ;—

O joy when the girdle of England appears !  
What moment in life is so conscious of  
love,

Of love in the heart made more happy by  
tears ?

## XXX

## ECHO, UPON THE GEMMI

WHAT beast of chase hath broken from  
the cover ?

Stern GEMMI listens to as full a cry,

As multitudinous a harmony

Of sounds as rang the heights of Latmos  
over,

When, from the soft couch of her sleeping  
 Lover,

Up-starting, Cynthia skimmed the moun-  
tain dew

In keen pursuit—and gave, where'er she  
flew,

Impetuous motion to the Stars above her.  
 A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on  
 Through the bleak concave, wakes this  
 wondrous chime  
 Of æry voices locked in union,—  
 Faint—far—off—near—deep—solemn and  
 sublime !—  
 So, from the body of one guilty deed,  
 A thousand ghostly fears, and haunting  
 thoughts, proceed !

XXXI

## PROCESSIONS

SUGGESTED ON A SABBATH MORNING IN  
THE VALE OF CHAMOUNY

To appease the Gods ; or public thanks to  
 yield ;  
 Or to solicit knowledge of events,  
 Which in her breast Futurity concealed ;  
 And that the past might have its true  
 intents  
 Feelingly told by living monuments —  
 Mankind of yore were prompted to devise  
 Rites such as yet Persepolis presents  
 Graven on her cankered walls, solemnities  
 That moved in long array before admiring  
 eyes.

The Hebrews thus, carrying in joyful state  
 Thick boughs of palm, and willows from  
 the brook,  
 Marched round the altar—to commemorate  
 How, when their course they through the  
 desert took,  
 Guided by signs which ne'er the sky for-  
 sook,  
 They lodged in leafy tents and cabins low ;  
 Green boughs were borne, while, for the  
 blast that shook  
 Down to the earth the walls of Jericho,  
 Shouts rise, and storms of sound from  
 lifted trumpets blow !

And thus, in order, 'mid the sacred grove  
 Fed in the Libyan waste by gushing wells,  
 The priests and damsels of Ammonian Jove  
 Provoked responses with shrill canticles ;  
 While, in a ship begirt with silver bells,  
 They round his altar bore the horned God,  
 Old Cham, the solar Deity, who dwells

Aloft, yet in a tilting vessel rode,  
 When universal sea the mountains over-  
 flowed.

Why speak of Roman Poms ? the haughty  
 claims  
 Of Chiefs triumphant after ruthless wars ;  
 The feast of Neptune—and the Cereal  
 Games,  
 With images, and crowns, and empty cars ;  
 The dancing Salii—on the shields of Mars  
 Smiting with fury ; and a deeper dread  
 Scattered on all sides by the hideous jars  
 Of Corybantian cymbals, while the head  
 Of Cybelé was seen, sublimely turreted !

At length a Spirit more subdued and soft  
 Appeared—to govern Christian pageantries :  
 The Cross, in calm procession, borne aloft  
 Moved to the chant of sober litanies,  
 Even such, this day, came wafted on the  
 breeze  
 From a long train—in hooded vestments  
 fair  
 Enwrapt—and winding, between Alpine  
 trees  
 Spiry and dark, around their House of  
 prayer,  
 Below the icy bed of bright ARGENTIERE.

Still in the vivid freshness of a dream,  
 The pageant haunts me as it met our  
 eyes !  
 Still, with those white-robed Shapes—a  
 living Stream,  
 The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise<sup>1</sup>  
 For the same service, by mysterious ties ;  
 Numbers exceeding credible account  
 Of number, pure and silent Votaries  
 Issuing or issued from a wintry fount ;  
 The impenetrable heart of that exalted  
 Mount !

They, too, who send so far a holy gleam  
 While they the Church engird with motion  
 slow,  
 A product of that awful Mountain seem,  
 Poured from his vaults of everlasting snow ;  
 Not virgin lilies marshalled in bright row,  
 Not swans descending with the stealthy  
 tide,  
 A livelier sisterly resemblance show

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Than the fair Forms, that in long order  
glide,

Bear to the glacier band—those Shapes  
altoft described.

Trembling, I look upon the secret springs  
Of that licentious craving in the mind  
To act the God among external things,  
To bind, on apt suggestion, or unbind;  
And marvel not that antique Faith inclined  
To crowd the world with metamorphosis,  
Vouchsafed in pity or in wrath assigned;  
Such insolent temptations wouldst thou  
miss,

Avoid these sights; nor brood o'er Fable's  
dark abyss!

## XXXII

## ELEGIAC STANZAS

The lamented Youth whose untimely death gave occasion to these elegiac verses, was Frederick William Goddard, from Boston in North America. He was in his twentieth year, and had resided for some time with a clergyman in the neighbourhood of Geneva for the completion of his education. Accompanied by a fellow-pupil, a native of Scotland, he had just set out on a Swiss tour when it was his misfortune to fall in with a Friend of mine who was hastening to join our party. The travellers, after spending a day together on the road from Berne and at Soleure, took leave of each other at night, the young men having intended to proceed directly to Zurich. But early in the morning my friend found his new acquaintances, who were informed of the object of his journey, and the friends he was in pursuit of, equipped to accompany him. We met at Lucerne the succeeding evening, and Mr. G. and his fellow-student became in consequence our travelling companions for a couple of days. We ascended the Righi together; and, after contemplating the sunrise from that noble mountain, we separated at an hour and on a spot well suited to the parting of those who were to meet no more. Our party descended through the valley of our Lady of the Snow, and our late companions, to Art. We had hoped to meet in a few weeks at Geneva; but on the third succeeding day (on the 21st of August) Mr. Goddard perished, being overset in a boat while crossing the lake of Zurich. His companion saved himself by swimming, and was hospitably received in the mansion of a Swiss gentleman (M. Keller) situated on the eastern coast of the lake. The corpse of poor Goddard was cast ashore on the estate of the same gentleman, who generously performed all the rites of

hospitality which could be rendered to the dead as well as to the living. He caused a handsome mural monument to be erected in the Church of Küsnacht, which records the premature fate of the young American, and on the shores too of the lake the traveller may read an inscription pointing out the spot where the body was deposited by the waves.

LULLED by the sound of pastoral bells,  
Rude Nature's Pilgrims did we go,  
From the dread summit of the Queen<sup>1</sup>  
Of mountains, through a deep ravine,  
Where, in her holy chapel, dwells  
"Our Lady of the Snow."

The sky was blue, the air was mild;  
Free were the streams and green the  
bowers;

As if, to rough assaults unknown,  
The genial spot had *ever* shown  
A countenance that as sweetly smiled—  
The face of summer-hours.

And we were gay, our hearts at ease;  
With pleasure dancing through the frame  
We journeyed; all we knew of care—  
Our path that straggled here and there;  
Of trouble—but the fluttering breeze;  
Of Winter—but a name.

If foresight could have rent the veil  
Of three short days—but hush—no more!  
Calm is the grave, and calmer none  
Than that to which thy cares are gone,  
Thou Victim of the stormy gale;  
Asleep on ZURICH's shore!

O GODDARD! what art thou?—a name—  
A sunbeam followed by a shade!  
Nor more, for aught that time supplies,  
The great, the experienced, and the wise;  
Too much from this frail earth we claim,  
And therefore are betrayed.

We met, while festive mirth ran wild,  
Where, from a deep lake's mighty urn,  
Forth slips, like an enfranchised slave,  
A sea-green river, proud to lave,  
With current swift and undefiled,  
The towers of old LUCERNE.

We parted upon solemn ground  
Far-lifted towards the unfading sky;

<sup>1</sup> Mount Righi—Regina Montium.

But all our thoughts were *then* of Earth,  
That gives to common pleasures birth;  
And nothing in our hearts we found  
That prompted even a sigh.

Fetch, sympathising Powers of air,  
Fetch, ye that post o'er seas and lands,  
Herbs, moistened by Virginian dew,  
A most untimely grave to strew,  
Whose turf may never know the care  
Of *kindred* human hands!

Beloved by every gentle Muse  
He left his Transatlantic home:  
Europe, a realised romance,  
Had opened on his eager glance;  
What present bliss!—what golden views!  
What stores for years to come!

Though lodged within no vigorous frame,  
His soul her daily tasks renewed,  
Blithe as the lark on sun-gilt wings  
High poised—or as the wren that sings  
In shady places, to proclaim  
Her modest gratitude.

Not vain is sadly-uttered praise;  
The words of truth's memorial vow  
Are sweet as morning fragrance shed  
From flowers 'mid GOLDAU's ruins bred;  
As evening's fondly-lingering rays,  
On RIGHI's silent brow.

Lamented Youth! to thy cold clay  
Fit obsequies the Stranger paid;  
And piety shall guard the Stone  
Which hath not left the spot unknown  
Where the wild waves resigned their prey—  
And *that* which marks thy bed.

And, when thy Mother weeps for Thee,  
Lost Youth! a solitary Mother;  
This tribute from a casual Friend  
A not unwelcome aid may lend,  
To feed the tender luxury,  
The rising pang to smother.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The persuasion here expressed was not groundless. The first human consolation that the afflicted Mother felt, was derived from this tribute to her son's memory, a fact which the author learned, at his own residence, from her Daughter, who visited Europe some years afterwards.—Goldau is one of the villages desolated by the fall of part of the Mountain Rossberg.

## XXXIII

## SKY-PROSPECT—FROM THE PLAIN OF FRANCE

Lo! in the burning west, the craggy nape  
Of a proud Ararat! and, thereupon,  
The Ark, her melancholy voyage done!  
Yon rampant cloud mimics a lion's shape;  
There, combats a huge crocodile—agate  
A golden spear to swallow! and that brown  
And massy grove, so near yon blazing town,  
Stirs and recedes—destruction to escape!  
Yet all is harmless—as the Elysian shades  
Where Spirits dwell in undisturbed repose—  
Silently disappears, or quickly fades:  
Meek Nature's evening comment on the  
shows

That for oblivion take their daily birth  
From all the fuming vanities of Earth!

## XXXIV

ON BEING STRANDED NEAR THE HARBOUR OF BOULOGNE<sup>2</sup>

WHY cast ye back upon the Gallic shore,  
Ye furious waves! a patriotic Son  
Of England—who in hope her coast had  
won,

His project crowned, his pleasant travel o'er?  
Well—let him pace this noted beach once  
more,

That gave the Roman his triumphal shells;  
That saw the Corsican his cap and bells  
Haughtily shake, a dreaming Conqueror!—  
Enough: my Country's cliffs I can behold,  
And proudly think, beside the chafing sea,  
Of checked ambition, tyranny controlled,  
And folly cursed with endless memory:  
These local recollections ne'er can cloy;  
Such ground I from my very heart enjoy!

## XXXV

## AFTER LANDING—THE VALLEY OF DOVER

Nov. 1820

WHERE be the noisy followers of the game  
Which faction breeds; the turmoil where?  
that passed

<sup>2</sup> See Note.



Through Europe, echoing from the news-  
man's blast,  
And filled our hearts with grief for Eng-  
land's shame.

Peace greets us;—rambling on without an  
aim

We mark majestic herds of cattle, free  
To ruminate,<sup>1</sup> couched on the grassy lea;  
And hear far-off the mellow horn proclaim  
The Season's harmless pastime. Ruder  
sound

Stirs not; enrapt I gaze with strange  
delight,

While consciousnesses, not to be disowned,  
Here only serve a feeling to invite  
That lifts the spirit to a calmer height,  
And makes this rural stillness more pro-  
found.

## XXXVI

## AT DOVER

For the impressions on which this sonnet turns,  
I am indebted to the experience of my daughter,  
during her residence at Dover with our dear  
friend, Miss Fenwick.

FROM the Pier's head, musing, and with  
increase

Of wonder, I have watched this sea-side  
Town,

Under the white cliff's battlemented crown,  
Hushed to a depth of more than Sabbath  
peace:

The streets and quays are thronged, but  
why disown

Their natural utterance: whence this  
strange release

From social noise—silence elsewhere un-  
known?—

A Spirit whispered, "Let all wonder cease;  
Ocean's o'erpowering murmurs have set  
free

Thy sense from pressure of life's common  
din;

As the dread Voice that speaks from out the  
sea

Of God's eternal Word, the Voice of  
Time

Doth deaden, shocks of tumult, shrieks of  
crime,

The shouts of folly, and the groans of  
sin."

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XXXVII

## DESULTORY STANZAS

UPON RECEIVING THE PRECEDING SHEETS  
FROM THE PRESS

Is then the final page before me spread,  
Nor further outlet left to mind or heart?  
Presumptuous Book! too forward to be  
read,

How can I give thee licence to depart?  
One tribute more: unbidden feelings start  
Forth from their coverts; slighted objects  
rise;

My spirit is the scene of such wild art  
As on Parnassus rules, when lightning flies,  
Visibly leading on the thunder's harmonies.

All that I saw returns upon my view,  
All that I heard comes back upon my ear,  
All that I felt this moment doth renew;  
And where the foot with no unmanly fear  
Recoiled—and wings alone could travel—  
there

I move at ease; and meet contending themes  
That press upon me, crossing the career  
Of recollections vivid as the dreams  
Of midnight,—cities, plains, forests, and  
mighty streams.

Where Mortal never breathed I dare to sit  
Among the interior Alps, gigantic crew,  
Who triumphed o'er diluvian power!—and  
yet

What are they but a wreck and residue,  
Whose only business is to perish?—true  
To which sad course, these wrinkled Sons  
of Time

Labour their proper greatness to subdue;  
Speaking of death alone, beneath a clime  
Where life and rapture flow in plenitude  
sublime.

Fancy hath flung for me an airy bridge  
Across thy long deep Valley, furious Rhone!  
Arch that *here* rests upon the granite ridge  
Of Monte Rosa—*there* on frailer stone  
Of secondary birth, the Jung-frau's cone;  
And, from that arch, down-looking on the  
Vale

The aspect I behold of every zone;  
A sea of foliage, tossing with the gale,  
Blithe Autumn's purple crown, and Winter's  
icy mail!

Far as ST. MAURICE, from yon eastern  
FORKS,<sup>1</sup>

Down the main avenue my sight can range :  
And all its branchy vales, and all that lurks  
Within them, church, and town, and hut,  
and grange,

For my enjoyment meet in vision strange ;  
Snows, torrents ;—to the region's utmost  
bound,

Life, Death, in amicable interchange ;—  
But list ! the avalanche—the hush profound  
That follows—yet more awful than that  
awful sound !

Is not the chamois suited to his place ?

The eagle worthy of her ancestry ?

—Let Empires fall ; but ne'er shall Ye  
disgrace

Your noble birthright, ye that occupy  
Your council-seats beneath the open sky,  
On Sarnen's Mount,<sup>2</sup> there judge of fit and  
right,

In simple democratic majesty ;

Soft breezes fanning your rough brows—  
the might

And purity of nature spread before your  
sight !

From this appropriate Court, renowned  
LUCERNE

Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge<sup>3</sup>—  
that cheers

The Patriot's heart with pictures rude and  
stern,

An uncouth Chronicle of glorious years.

Like portraiture, from loftier source, endears  
That work of kindred frame, which spans  
the lake

Just at the point of issue, where it fears  
The form and motion of a stream to take ;  
Where it begins to stir, yet voiceless as a  
snake.

Volumes of sound, from the Cathedral  
rolled,

This long-roofed Vista penetrate—but see,  
One after one, its tablets, that unfold  
The whole design of Scripture history ;  
From the first tasting of the fatal Tree,  
Till the bright Star appeared in eastern  
skies,

Announcing, ONE was born mankind to free ;

His acts, his wrongs, his final sacrifice ;  
Lessons for every heart, a Bible for all eyes.

Our pride misleads, our timid likings kill.

—Long may these homely Works devised  
of old,

These simple efforts of Helvetian skill,  
Aid, with congenial influence, to uphold  
The State,—the Country's destiny to  
mould ;

Turning, for them who pass, the common  
dust

Of servile opportunity to gold ;

Filling the soul with sentiments august—

The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and the  
just !

No more ; Time halts not in his noiseless  
march—

Nor turns, nor winds, as doth the liquid  
flood ;

Life slips from underneath us, like that arch  
Of airy workmanship whereon we stood,  
Earth stretched below, heaven in our  
neighbourhood.

Go forth, my little Book ! pursue thy way ;  
Go forth, and please the gentle and the  
good ;

Nor be a whisper stifled, if it say

That treasures, yet untouched, may grace  
some future Lay.

## THE RIVER DUDDON<sup>3</sup>

### A SERIES OF SONNETS

1820.

It is with the little river Duddon as it is with  
most other rivers, Ganges and Nile not excepted,  
—many springs might claim the honour of being  
its head. In my own fancy I have fixed its rise  
near the noted Shire-stones placed at the meet-  
ing-point of the counties, Westmoreland, Cumber-  
land, and Lancashire. They stand by the wayside  
on the top of the Wrynose Pass, and it used to  
be reckoned a proud thing to say that, by touch-  
ing them at the same time with feet and hands,  
one had been in the three counties at once. At  
what point of its course the stream takes the  
name of Duddon I do not know. I first became  
acquainted with the Duddon, as I have good  
reason to remember, in early boyhood. Upon

<sup>1</sup> At the head of the Vallais. See Note.

<sup>2</sup> See Note.

<sup>3</sup> See Note.

the banks of the Derwent I had learnt to be very fond of angling. Fish abound in that large river; not so in the small streams in the neighbourhood of Hawkshead; and I fell into the common delusion that the farther from home the better sport would be had. Accordingly, one day I attached myself to a person living in the neighbourhood of Hawkshead, who was going to try his fortune as an angler near the source of the Duddon. We fished a great part of the day with very sorry success, the rain pouring torrents, and long before we got home I was worn out with fatigue; and, if the good man had not carried me on his back, I must have lain down under the best shelter I could find. Little did I think then it would be my lot to celebrate, in a strain of love and admiration, the stream which for many years I never thought of without recollections of disappointment and distress.

During my college vacation, and two or three years afterwards, before taking my Bachelor's degree, I was several times resident in the house of a near relative who lived in the small town of Broughton. I passed many delightful hours upon the banks of this river, which becomes an estuary about a mile from that place. The remembrances of that period are the subject of the 21st Sonnet. The subject of the 27th is in fact taken from a tradition belonging to Rydal Hall, which once stood, as is believed, upon a rocky and woody hill on the right hand as you go from Rydal to Ambleside, and was deserted from the superstitious fear here described, and the present site fortunately chosen instead. The present Hall was erected by Sir Michael le Fleming, and it may be hoped that at some future time there will be an edifice more worthy of so beautiful a position. With regard to the 30th Sonnet it is odd enough that this imagination was realised in the year 1840, when I made a tour through that district with my wife and daughter, Miss Fenwick and her niece, and Mr. and Miss Quillinan. Before our return from Seathwaite chapel the party separated. Mrs. Wordsworth, while most of us went further up the stream, chose an opposite direction, having told us that we should overtake her on our way to Ulpha. But she was tempted out of the main road to ascend a rocky eminence near it, thinking it impossible we should pass without seeing her. This, however, unfortunately happened, and then ensued vexation and distress, especially to me, which I should be ashamed to have recorded, for I lost my temper entirely. Neither I nor those that were with me saw her again till we reached the Inn at Broughton, seven miles. This may perhaps in some degree excuse my irritability on the occasion, for I could not but think she had been much to blame. It appeared, however, on explanation, that she had

remained on the rock, calling out and waving her handkerchief as we were passing, in order that we also might ascend and enjoy a prospect which had much charmed her. "But on we went, her signals proving vain." How then could she reach Broughton before us? When we found she had not gone on before to Ulpha Kirk, Mr. Quillinan went back in one of the carriages in search of her. He met her on the road, took her up, and by a shorter way conveyed her to Broughton, where we were all reunited and spent a happy evening.

I have many affecting remembrances connected with this stream. Those I forbear to mention; especially things that occurred on its banks during the later part of that visit to the seaside of which the former part is detailed in my "Epistle to Sir George Beaumont."

The River Duddon rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; and, having served as a boundary to the two last counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millum.

To

#### THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH

(WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON,  
AND OTHER POEMS IN THIS COLLECTION, 1820)

THE Minstrels played their Christmas tune  
To-night beneath my cottage-eaves;  
While, smitten by a lofty moon,  
The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,  
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,  
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze  
Had sunk to rest with folded wings:  
Keen was the air, but could not freeze,  
Nor check, the music of the strings;  
So stout and hardy were the band  
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand;

And who but listened?—till was paid  
Respect to every Inmate's claim:  
The greeting given, the music played,  
In honour of each household name,  
Duly pronounced with lusty call,  
And "merry Christmas" wished to all!

O Brother! I revere the choice  
That took thee from thy native hills;  
And it is given thee to rejoice:  
Though public care full often tills  
(Heaven only witness of the toil)  
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that Thou, with me and mine,  
Hadst heard this never-failing rite;  
And seen on other faces shine  
A true revival of the light  
Which Nature and these rustic Powers,  
In simple childhood, spread through ours.

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait  
On these expected annual rounds;  
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate  
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,  
Or they are offered at the door  
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep  
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,  
To hear—and sink again to sleep!  
Or, at an earlier call, to mark,  
By blazing fire, the still suspense  
Of self-complacent innocence;

The mutual nod,—the grave disguise  
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er;  
And some unbidden tears that rise  
For names once heard, and heard no more;  
Tears brightened by the serenade  
For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah! not for emerald fields alone,  
With ambient streams more pure and bright  
Than fabled Cytherea's zone  
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,  
Is to my heart of hearts endeared  
The ground where we were born and reared!

Hail, ancient Manners! sure defence,  
Where they survive, of wholesome laws;  
Remnants of love whose modest sense  
Thus into narrow room withdraws;  
Hail, Usages of pristine mould,  
'And ye that guard them, Mountains old!

Bear with me, Brother! quench the thought  
That slights this passion, or condemns;  
If thee fond Fancy ever brought  
From the proud margin of the Thames,  
And Lambeth's venerable towers,  
To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,  
Short leisure even in busiest days;  
Moments, to cast a look behind,  
And profit by those kindly rays  
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,  
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din  
Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,  
A pleased attention I may win  
To agitations less severe,  
That neither overwhelm nor cloy,  
But fill the hollow vale with joy!

## I

NOT envying Latian shades—if yet they  
throw  
A grateful coolness round that crystal  
Spring,  
Blandusia, prattling as when long ago  
The Sabine Bard was moved her praise to  
sing;  
Careless of flowers that in perennial blow  
Round the moist marge of Persian fountains  
cling;  
Headless of Alpine torrents thundering  
Through ice-built arches radiant as heaven's  
bow;  
I seek the birthplace of a native Stream.—  
All hail, ye mountains! hail, thou morning  
light!  
Better to breathe at large on this clear  
height  
Than toil in needless sleep from dream to  
dream:  
Pure flow the verse, pure, vigorous, free,  
and bright,  
For Duddon, long-loved Duddon, is my  
theme!

## II

CHILD of the clouds! remote from every  
taint  
Of sordid industry thy lot is cast;  
Thine are the honours of the lofty waste  
Not seldom, when with heat the valleys  
faint,  
Thy handmaid Frost with spangled tissue  
quaint  
Thy cradle decks;—to chant thy birth, thou  
hast  
No meaner Poet than the whistling Blast,  
And Desolation is thy Patron-saint!  
She guards thee, ruthless Power! who  
would not spare  
Those mighty forests, once the bison's  
screen,  
Where stalked the huge deer to his shaggy  
lair!<sup>1</sup>  
Through paths and alleys roofed with  
darkest green;  
Thousands of years before the silent air  
Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter  
keen!

<sup>1</sup> The deer alluded to is the Leigh, a gigantic species long since extinct.

## III

How shall I paint thee?—Be this naked  
stone  
My seat, while I give way to such intent ;  
Pleased could my verse, a speaking monu-  
ment,  
Make to the eyes of men thy features known.  
But as of all those tripping lambs not one  
Outruns his fellows, so hath Nature lent  
To thy beginning nought that doth present  
Peculiar ground for hope to build upon.  
'To dignify the spot that gives thee birth,  
No sign of hoar Antiquity's esteem  
Appears, and none of modern Fortune's  
care ;  
Yet thou thyself hast round thee shed a  
gleam  
Of brilliant moss, instinct with freshness  
rare ;  
Prompt offering to thy Foster-mother,  
Earth !

## IV

TAKE, cradled Nursling of the mountain,  
take  
This parting glance, no negligent adieu !  
A Protean change seems wrought while I  
pursue  
The curves, a loosely-scattered chain doth  
make ;  
Or rather thou appear'st a glistening snake,  
Silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,  
Thridding with sinuous lapse the rushes,  
through  
Dwarf willows gliding, and by ferny brake.  
Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted  
Rill  
Robed instantly in garb of snow-white  
foam ;  
And laughing dares the Adventurer, who  
hath clomb  
So high, a rival purpose to fulfil ;  
Else let the dastard backward wend, and  
roam,  
Seeking less bold achievement, where he  
will !

## V

SOLE listener, Duddon ! to the breeze that  
played  
With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful  
sound

Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy  
mound—  
Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid  
The sun in heaven !—but now, to form a  
shade  
For Thee, green alders have together wound  
Their foliage ; ashes flung their arms around ;  
And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.  
And thou hast also tempted here to rise,  
'Mid sheltering pines, this Cottage rude  
and grey ;  
Whose ruddy children, by the mother's eyes  
Carelessly watched, sport through the sum-  
mer day,  
Thy pleased associates :—light as endless  
May  
On infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

## VI

## FLOWERS

ERE yet our course was graced with social  
trees  
It lacked not old remains of hawthorn  
bowers,  
Where small birds warbled to their para-  
mours ;  
And, earlier still, was heard the hum of  
bees ;  
I saw them ply their harmless robberies,  
And caught the fragrance which the sundry  
flowers,  
Fed by the stream with soft perpetual  
showers,  
Plenteously yielded to the vagrant breeze.  
There bloomed the strawberry of the wilder-  
ness ;  
The trembling eyebright showed her sapphire  
blue,<sup>1</sup>  
The thyme her purple, like the blush of  
Even ;  
And if the breath of some to no caress  
Invited, forth they peeped so fair to view,  
All kinds alike seemed favourites of Heaven.

## VII

"CHANGE me, some God, into that breath-  
ing rose !"  
The love-sick Stripling fancifully sighs,  
The envied flower beholding, as it lies  
On Laura's breast, in exquisite repose ;  
Or he would pass into her bird, that throws

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

The darts of song from out its wiry cage;  
Enraptured,—could he for himself engage  
The thousandth part of what the Nymph  
bestows;

And what the little careless innocent  
Ungraciously receives. Too daring choice!  
There are whose calmer mind it would  
content

To be an uncultured floweret of the glen,  
Fearless of plough and scythe; or darkling  
wren

That tunes on Duddon's banks her slender  
voice.

## VIII

WHAT aspect bore the Man who roved or  
fled,

First of his tribe, to this dark dell—who  
first

In this pellucid Current slaked his thirst?  
What hopes came with him? what designs  
were spread

Along his path? His unprotected bed  
What dreams encompassed? Was the in-  
truder nursed

In hideous usages, and rites accursed,  
That thinned the living and disturbed the  
dead?

No voice replies;—both air and earth are  
mute;

And Thou, blue Streamlet, murmuring  
yield'st no more

Than a soft record, that, whatever fruit  
Of ignorance thou might'st witness hereto-  
fore,

Thy function was to heal and to restore,  
To soothe and cleanse, not madden and  
pollute!

## IX

## THE STEPPING-STONES

THE struggling Rill insensibly is grown  
Into a Brook of loud and stately march,  
Crossed ever and anon by plank or arch;  
And, for like use, lo! what might seem a  
zone

Chosen for ornament—stone matched with  
stone

In studied symmetry, with interspace  
For the clear waters to pursue their race  
Without restraint. How swiftly have they  
flown,

Succeeding—still succeeding! Here the  
Child

Puts, when the high-swoln Flood runs fierce  
and wild,

His budding courage to the proof; and  
here

Declining Manhood learns to note the sly  
And sure encroachments of infirmity,  
Thinking how fast time runs, life's end how  
near!

## X

## THE SAME SUBJECT

NOT so that Pair whose youthful spirits  
dance

With prompt emotion, urging them to  
pass;

A sweet confusion checks the Shepherd-  
lass;

Blushing she eyes the dizzy flood askance;  
To stop ashamed—too timid to advance;  
She ventures once again—another pause!  
His outstretched hand He tauntingly with-  
draws—

She sues for help with piteous utterance!  
Chidden she chides again; the thrilling  
touch

Both feel, when he renews the wished-for  
aid:

Ah! if their fluttering hearts should stir  
too much,

Should beat too strongly, both may be  
betrayed.

The frolic Loves, who, from yon high rock,  
see

The struggle, clap their wings for victory!

## XI

## THE FAËRY CHASM

No fiction was it of the antique age:  
A sky-blue stone, within this sunless cleft,  
Is of the very footmarks unbreft  
Which tiny Elves impressed;—on that  
smooth stage

Dancing with all their brilliant equipage  
In secret revels—haply after theft  
Of some sweet Babe—Flower stolen, and  
coarse Weed left

For the distracted Mother to assuage  
Her grief with, as she might!—But, where,  
oh! where

Is traceable a vestige of the notes  
That ruled those dances wild in character?—  
Deep underground? Or in the upper air,  
On the shrill wind of midnight? or where  
floats  
O'er twilight fields the autumnal gossamer?

## XII

## HINTS FOR THE FANCY

ON, loitering Muse—the swift Stream  
chides us—on!  
Albeit his deep-worn channel doth immature  
Objects immense portrayed in miniature,  
Wild shapes for many a strange comparison!  
Niagaras, Alpine passes, and anon  
Abodes of Naiads, calm abysses pure,  
Bright liquid mansions, fashioned to endure  
When the broad oak drops, a leafless  
skeleton,  
And the solidities of mortal pride,  
Palace and tower, are crumbled into dust!—  
The Bard who walks with Duddon for his  
guide,  
Shall find such toys of fancy thickly set:  
Turn from the sight, enamoured Muse—  
we must;  
And, if thou canst, leave them without  
regret!

## XIII

## OPEN PROSPECT

HAIL to the fields—with Dwellings sprinkled  
o'er,  
And one small hamlet, under a green hill  
Clustering, with barn and byre, and spout-  
ing mill!  
A glance suffices;—should we wish for more,  
Gay June would scorn us. But when bleak  
winds roar  
Through the stiff lance-like shoots of pollard  
ash,  
Dread swell of sound! loud as the gusts  
that lash  
The matted forests of Ontario's shore  
By wasteful steel unsmitten—then would I  
Turn into port; and, reckless of the gale,  
Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,  
While the warm hearth exalts the mantling  
ale,  
Laugh with the generous household heartily  
At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale!

## XIV

O MOUNTAIN Stream! the Shepherd and  
his Cot  
Are privileged inmates of deep solitude;  
Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude  
A field or two of brighter green, or plot  
Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot  
Of stationary sunshine:—thou hast viewed  
These only, Duddon! with their paths re-  
newed  
By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.  
Thee hath some awful Spirit impelled to  
leave,  
Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,  
Though simple thy companions were and  
few;  
And through this wilderness a passage  
cleave  
Attended but by thy own voice, save when  
The clouds and fowls of the air thy way  
pursue! 1806.

## XV

FROM this deep chasm, where quivering  
sunbeams play  
Upon its loftiest crags, mine eyes behold  
A gloomy NICHE, capacious, blank, and  
cold;  
A concave free from shrubs and mosses grey;  
In semblance fresh, as if, with dire affray,  
Some Statue, placed amid these regions old  
For tutelary service, thence had rolled,  
Startling the flight of timid Yesterday!  
Was it by mortals sculptured?—weary slaves  
Of slow endeavour! or abruptly cast  
Into rude shape by fire, with roaring blast  
Tempestuously let loose from central caves?  
Or fashioned by the turbulence of waves,  
Then, when o'er highest hills the Deluge  
passed?

## XVI

## AMERICAN TRADITION

SUCH fruitless questions may not long be-  
guile  
Or plague the fancy 'mid the sculptured  
shows  
Conspicuous yet where Oroonoko flows;  
There would the Indian answer with a smile  
Aimed at the White Man's ignorance, the  
while,

Of the GREAT WATERS telling how they  
 rose,  
 Covered the plains, and, wandering where  
 they chose,  
 Mounted through every intricate defile,  
 Triumphant—Inundation wide and deep,  
 O'er which his Fathers urged, to ridge and  
 steep  
 Else unapproachable, their buoyant way;  
 And carved, on mural cliff's undreaded side,  
 Sun, moon, and stars, and beast of chase  
 or prey;  
 Whate'er they sought, shunned, loved, or  
 deified!<sup>1</sup>

## XVII

## RETURN

A DARK plume fetch me from yon blasted  
 yew,  
 Perched on whose top the Danish Raven  
 croaks;  
 Aloft, the imperial Bird of Rome invokes  
 Departed ages, shedding where he flew  
 Loose fragments of wild wailing, that be-  
 strew  
 The clouds and thrill the chambers of the  
 rocks;  
 And into silence hush the timorous flocks,  
 That, calmly couching while the nightly dew  
 Moistened each fleece, beneath the twinkling  
 stars  
 Slept amid that lone Camp on Hardknot's  
 height,<sup>2</sup>  
 Whose Guardians bent the knee to Jove  
 and Mars:  
 Or, near that mystic Round of Druid frame  
 Tardily sinking by its proper weight  
 Deep into patient Earth, from whose smooth  
 breast it came!

## XVIII

## SEATHWAITE CHAPEL

SACRED Religion! "mother of form and  
 fear,"  
 Dread arbitress of mutable respect,  
 New rites ordaining when the old are  
 wrecked,  
 Or cease to please the fickle worshipper;

<sup>1</sup> See Humboldt's *Personal Narrative*.<sup>2</sup> See Note.

Mother of Love! (that name best suits thee  
 here)  
 Mother of Love! for this deep vale, protect  
 Truth's holy lamp, pure source of bright  
 effect,  
 Gifted to purge the vapoury atmosphere  
 That seeks to stifle it;—as in those days  
 When this low Pile<sup>3</sup> a Gospel Teacher  
 knew,  
 Whose good works formed an endless re-  
 tinue:  
 A Pastor such as Chaucer's verse portrays;  
 Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert  
 drew;  
 And tender Goldsmith crowned with death-  
 less praise!

## XIX

## TRIBUTARY STREAM

My frame hath often trembled with delight  
 When hope presented some far-distant good,  
 That seemed from heaven descending, like  
 the flood  
 Of yon pure waters, from their æry height  
 Hurrying, with lordly Duddon to unite;  
 Who, 'mid a world of images impest  
 On the calm depth of his transparent breast,  
 Appears to cherish most that Torrent white,  
 The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all!  
 And seldom hath ear listened to a tune  
 More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,  
 Sworn by that voice—whose murmur  
 musical  
 Announces to the thirsty fields a boon  
 Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall  
 fall.

## XX

## THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE

THE old inventive Poets, had they seen,  
 Or rather felt, the entrancement that detains  
 Thy waters, Duddon! 'mid these flowery  
 plains—  
 The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,  
 Transferred to bowers imperishably green,  
 Had beautified Elysium! But these chains  
 Will soon be broken;—a rough course re-  
 mains,  
 Rough as the past; where Thou, of placid  
 mien,

<sup>3</sup> See Note.



Innocuous as a firstling of the flock,  
And countenanced like a soft cerulean sky,  
Shalt change thy temper; and, with many  
a shock

Given and received in mutual jeopardy,  
Dance, like a Bacchanal, from rock to rock,  
Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and high!

## XXI

WHENCE that low voice?—A whisper from  
the heart,  
That told of days long past, when here I  
roved

With friends and kindred tenderly beloved;  
Some who had early mandates to depart,  
Yet are allowed to steal my path athwart  
By Duddon's side; once more do we unite,  
Once more, beneath the kind Earth's  
tranquil light;

And smothered joys into new being start.  
From her unworthy seat, the cloudy stall  
Of Time, breaks forth triumphant Memory;  
Her glistening tresses bound, yet light and  
free

As golden locks of birch, that rise and fall  
On gales that breathe too gently to recall  
Aught of the fading year's inclemency!

## XXII

## TRADITION

A LOVE-LORN Maid, at some far-distant  
time,  
Came to this hidden pool, whose depths  
surpass

In crystal clearness Dian's looking-glass;  
And, gazing, saw that Rose, which from  
the prime

Derives its name, reflected, as the chime  
Of echo doth reverberate some sweet sound:  
The starry treasure from the blue profound  
She longed to ravish;—shall she plunge, or  
climb

The humid precipice, and seize the guest  
Of April, smiling high in upper air?  
Desperate alternative! what fiend could  
dare

To prompt the thought?—Upon the steep  
rock's breast

The lonely Primrose yet renews its bloom,  
Untouched memento of her hapless doom!

## XXIII

## SHEEP-WASHING

SAD thoughts, avaunt!—partake we their  
blithe cheer

Who gathered in betimes the unshorn flock  
To wash the fleece, where haply bands of  
rock,

Checking the stream, make a pool smooth  
and clear

As this we look on. Distant Mountains  
bear,

Hear and repeat, the turmoil that unites  
Clamour of boys with innocent despites  
Of barking dogs, and bleatings from strange  
fear.

And what if Duddon's spotless flood receive  
Unwelcome mixtures as the uncouth noise  
Thickens, the pastoral River will forgive  
Such wrong; nor need we blame the  
licensed joys,

Though false to Nature's quiet equipoise:  
Frank are the sports, the stains are fugitive.

## XXIV

## THE RESTING-PLACE

MID-NOON is past;—upon the sultry mead  
No zephyr breathes, no cloud its shadow  
throws:

If we advance unstrengthened by repose,  
Farewell the solace of the vagrant reed!  
This Nook—with woodbine hung and  
straggling weed

Tempting recess as ever pilgrim chose,  
Half grot, half arbour—proffers to enclose  
Body and mind, from molestation freed,  
In narrow compass—narrow as itself:  
Or if the Fancy, too industrious Elf,  
Be loth that we should breathe awhile  
exempt

From new incitements friendly to our task,  
Here wants not stealthy prospect, that may  
tempt

Loose Idless to forego her wily mask.

## XXV

METHINKS 'twere no unprecedented feat  
Should some benignant Minister of air  
Lift, and encircle with a cloudy chair,

The One for whom my heart shall ever  
beat  
With tenderest love;—or, if a safer seat  
Atween his downy wings be furnished,  
there  
Would lodge her, and the cherished burden  
bear  
O'er hill and valley to this dim retreat!  
Rough ways my steps have trod;—too  
rough and long  
For her companionship; here dwells soft  
ease:  
With sweets that she partakes not some  
distaste  
Mingles, and lurking consciousness of  
wrong;  
Languish the flowers; the waters seem to  
waste  
Their vocal charm; their sparklings cease  
to please.

## XXVI

RETURN, Content! for fondly I pursued,  
Even when a child, the Streams—unheard,  
unseen;  
Through tangled woods, impending rocks  
between;  
Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed  
The sullen reservoirs whence their bold  
brood—  
Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous,  
keen,  
Green as the salt-sea billows, white and  
green—  
Poured down the hills, a choral multitude!  
Nor have I tracked their course for scanty  
gains;  
They taught me random cares and truant  
joys,  
That shield from mischief and preserve  
from stains  
Vague minds, while men are growing out  
of boys;  
Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise  
Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile  
reins.

## XXVII

FALLEN, and diffused into a shapeless heap,  
Or quietly self-buried in earth's mould,  
Is that embattled House, whose massy  
Keep,

Flung from yon cliff a shadow large and  
cold,  
There dwelt the gay, the bountiful, the  
bold;  
Till nightly lamentations, like the sweep  
Of winds—though winds were silent—  
struck a deep  
And lasting terror through that ancient Hold.  
Its line of Warriors fled;—they shrunk  
when tried  
By ghostly power:—but Time's unsparing  
hand  
Hath plucked such foes, like weeds, from  
out the land;  
And now, if men with men in peace abide,  
All other strength the weakest may withstand,  
All worse assaults may safely be defied.

## XXVIII

## JOURNEY RENEWED

I ROSE while yet the cattle, heat-opprest,  
Crowded together under rustling trees  
Brushed by the current of the water-breeze;  
And for *their* sakes, and love of all that  
rest,  
On Duddon's margin, in the sheltering  
nest;  
For all the startled scaly tribes that slink  
Into his coverts, and each fearless link  
Of dancing insects forged upon his breast;  
For these, and hopes and recollections  
worn  
Close to the vital seat of human clay;  
Glad meetings, tender partings, that up-  
stay  
The drooping mind of absence, by vows  
sworn  
In his pure presence near the trysting  
thorn—  
I thanked the Leader of my onward way.

## XXIX

No record tells of lance opposed to lance,  
Horse charging horse, 'mid these retired  
domains;  
Tells that their turf drank purple from the  
veins  
Of heroes, fallen, or struggling to advance,  
Till doubtful combat issued in a trance

Of victory, that struck through heart and reins

Even to the inmost seat of mortal pains,  
And lightened o'er the pallid countenance.  
Yet, to the loyal and the brave, who lie  
In the blank earth, neglected and forlorn,  
The passing Winds memorial tribute pay;  
The Torrents chant their praise, inspiring scorn

Of power usurped; with proclamation high,  
And glad acknowledgment, of lawful sway.

## xxx

Who swerves from innocence, who makes divorce

Of that serene companion—a good name,  
Recovers not his loss; but walks with shame,

With doubt, with fear, and haply with remorse;

And oft-times he—who, yielding to the force

Of chance-temptation, ere his journey end,  
From chosen comrade turns, or faithful friend—

In vain shall rue the broken intercourse.

Not so with such as loosely wear the chain  
That binds them, pleasant River! to thy side:—

Through the rough copse wheel thou with hasty stride;

I choose to saunter o'er the grassy plain,  
Sure, when the separation has been tried,  
That we, who part in love, shall meet again.

## xxxI

THE KIRK of ULPHA to the pilgrim's eye  
Is welcome as a star, that doth present  
Its shining forehead through the peaceful rent

Of a black cloud diffused o'er half the sky;

Or as a fruitful palm-tree towering high  
O'er the parched waste beside an Arab's tent;

Or the Indian tree whose branches, downward bent,

Take root again, a boundless canopy.

How sweet were leisure! could it yield no more

Than 'mid that wave-washed Churchyard to recline,

From pastoral graves extracting thoughts divine;

Or there to pace, and mark the summits hoar

Of distant moonlit mountains faintly shine,  
Soothed by the unseen River's gentle roar.

## xxxII

Not hurled precipitous from steep to steep;  
Lingering no more 'mid flower-enamelled lands

And blooming thickets; nor by rocky bands

Held; but in radiant progress toward the Deep

Where mightiest rivers into powerless sleep Sink, and forget heir nature—*now* expands  
Majestic Duddon, over smooth flat sands

Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep!  
Beneath an ampler sky a region wide

Is opened round him:—hamlets, towers, and towns,

And blue-topped hills, behold him from afar;

In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied  
Spreading his bosom under Kentish downs,  
With commerce freighted, or triumphant war.

## xxxIII

## CONCLUSION

BUT here no cannon thunders to the gale;  
Upon the wave no haughty pendants cast  
A crimson splendour: lowly is the mast  
That rises here, and humbly spread, the sail;

While, less disturbed than in the narrow Vale

'Through which with strange vicissitudes he passed,

The Wanderer seeks that receptacle vast  
Where all his unambitious functions fail  
And may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream! be free—

The sweets of earth contentedly resigned,  
And each tumultuous working left behind  
At seemly distance—to advance like Thee;  
Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of mind  
And soul, to mingle with Eternity!

## XXXIV

## AFTER-THOUGHT

*I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,  
As being past away.—Vain sympathies!  
For, backward, Duddon, as I cast my eyes,  
I see what was, and is, and will abide;  
Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide;  
The Form remains, the Function never dies;  
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,  
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied  
The elements, must vanish;—be it so!  
Enough, if something from our hands have power  
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;  
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,  
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower,  
We feel that we are greater than we know.<sup>1</sup>*

## A PARSONAGE IN OXFORDSHIRE

This Parsonage was the residence of my friend Jones, and is particularly described in another note.

WHERE holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,  
Is marked by no distinguishable line;  
The turf unites, the pathways intertwine;  
And, wheresoe'er the stealing footstep tends,  
Garden, and that domain where kindred, friends,  
And neighbours rest together, here confound  
Their several features, mingled like the sound  
Of many waters, or as evening blends  
With shady night. Soft airs, from shrub and flower,  
Waft fragrant greetings to each silent grave;  
And while those lofty poplars gently wave  
Their tops, between them comes and goes a sky  
Bright as the glimpses of eternity,  
To saints accorded in their mortal hour.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

1820.

## TO ENTERPRISE

KEEP for the Young the impassioned smile  
Shed from thy countenance, as I see thee stand

High on that chalky cliff of Britain's Isle,  
A slender volume grasping in thy hand—  
(Perchance the pages that relate  
The various turns of Crusoe's fate)—  
Ah, spare the exulting smile,  
And drop thy pointing finger bright  
As the first flash of beacon light;  
But neither veil thy head in shadows dim,  
Nor turn thy face away  
From One who, in the evening of his day,  
To thee would offer no presumptuous hymn!

I

Bold Spirit! who art free to rove  
Among the starry courts of Jove,  
And oft in splendour dost appear  
Embodied to poetic eyes,  
While traversing this nether sphere,  
Where Mortals call thee ENTERPRISE.  
Daughter of Hope! her favourite Child,  
Whom she to young Ambition bore,  
When hunter's arrow first defiled  
The grove, and stained the turf with gore;  
Thee winged Fancy took, and nursed  
On broad Euphrates' palmy shore,  
And where the mightier Waters burst  
From caves of Indian mountains hoar!  
She wrapped thee in a panther's skin;  
And Thou, thy favourite food to win,  
The flame-eyed eagle oft wouldst scare  
From her rock-fortress in mid air,  
With infant shout; and often sweep,  
Paired with the ostrich, o'er the plain;  
Or, tired with sport, wouldst sink asleep  
Upon the couchant lion's mane!  
With rolling years thy strength increased  
And, far beyond thy native East,  
To thee, by varying titles known  
As variously thy power was shown,  
Did incense-bearing altars rise,  
Which caught the blaze of sacrifice,  
From suppliants panting for the skies!

II

What though this ancient Earth be trod  
No more by step of Demi-god

Mounting from glorious deed to deed  
 As thou from clime to clime didst lead;  
 Yet still, the bosom beating high,  
 And the hushed farewell of an eye  
 Where no procrastinating gaze  
 A last infirmity betrays,  
 Prove that thy heaven-descended sway  
 Shall ne'er submit to cold decay.  
 By thy divinity impelled,  
 The Stripling seeks the tented field;  
 The aspiring Virgin kneels; and, pale  
 With awe, receives the hallowed veil,  
 A soft and tender Heroine  
 Vowed to severer discipline;  
 Inflamed by thee, the blooming Boy  
 Makes of the whistling shrouds a toy,  
 And of the ocean's dismal breast  
 A play-ground,—or a couch of rest;  
 'Mid the blank world of snow and ice,  
 Thou to his dangers dost enchain  
 The Chamois-chaser awed in vain  
 By chasm or dizzy precipice;  
 And hast Thou not with triumph seen  
 How soaring Mortals glide between  
 Or through the clouds, and brave the light  
 With bolder than Icarian flight?  
 How they, in bells of crystal, dive—  
 Where winds and waters cease to strive—  
 For no unholy visitings,  
 Among the monsters of the Deep;  
 And all the sad and precious things  
 Which there in ghastly silence sleep?  
 Or, adverse tides and currents headed,  
 And breathless calms no longer dreaded,  
 In never-slackening voyage go  
 Straight as an arrow from the bow;  
 And, slighting sails and scorning oars,  
 Keep faith with Time on distant shores?  
 —Within our fearless reach are placed  
 The secrets of the burning Waste;  
 Egyptian tombs unlock their dead,  
 Nile trembles at his fountain head;  
 Thou speak'st—and lo! the polar Seas  
 Unbosom their last mysteries.  
 —But oh! what transports, what sublime  
 reward,  
 Won from the world of mind, dost thou  
 prepare  
 For philosophic Sage; or high-souled Bard  
 Who, for thy service trained in lonely  
 woods,  
 Hath fed on pageants floating through the  
 air,  
 Or calentured in depth of limpid floods;

Nor grieves—tho' doomed thro' silent night  
 to bear  
 The domination of his glorious themes,  
 Or struggle in the net-work of thy dreams!

## III

If there be movements in the Patriot's soul,  
 From source still deeper, and of higher  
 worth,  
 'Tis thine the quickening impulse to control,  
 And in due season send the mandate forth;  
 Thy call a prostrate Nation can restore,  
 When but a single Mind resolves to crouch  
 no more.

## IV

Dread Minister of wrath!  
 Who to their destined punishment dost urge  
 The Pharaohs of the earth, the men of  
 hardened heart!  
 Not unassisted by the flattering stars,  
 Thou strew'st temptation o'er the path  
 When they in pomp depart  
 With trampling horses and refulgent cars—  
 Soon to be swallowed by the briny surge;  
 Or cast, for lingering death, on unknown  
 strands;  
 Or caught amid a whirl of desert sands—  
 An Army now, and now a living hill!  
 That a brief while heaves with convulsive  
 throes—  
 Then all is still;  
 Or, to forget their madness and their woes,  
 Wrapt in a winding-sheet of spotless snows!

## V

Back flows the willing current of my Song:  
 If to provoke such doom the Impious dare,  
 Why should it daunt a blameless prayer?  
 —Bold Goddess! range our Youth among;  
 Nor let thy genuine impulse fail to beat  
 In hearts no longer young;  
 Still may a veteran Few have pride  
 In thoughts whose sternness makes them  
 sweet;  
 In fixed resolves by Reason justified;  
 That to their object cleave like sleet  
 Whitening a pine tree's northern side,  
 When fields are naked far and wide.  
 And withered leaves, from earth's cold  
 breast  
 Up-caught in whirlwinds, nowhere can find  
 rest.

1 See Note.

## VI

But, if such homage thou disdain  
 As doth with mellowing years agree,  
 One rarely absent from thy train  
 More humble favours may obtain  
 For thy contented Votary.  
 She, who incites the frolic lambs  
 In presence of their heedless dams,  
 And to the solitary fawn  
 Vouchsafes her lessons, bounteous Nymph  
 That wakes the breeze, the sparkling lymph  
 Doth hurry to the lawn;  
 She, who inspires that strain of joyance holy  
 Which the sweet Bird, misnamed the  
 melancholy,  
 Pours forth in shady groves, shall plead  
 for me;  
 And vernal mornings opening bright  
 With views of undefined delight,  
 And cheerful songs, and suns that shine  
 On busy days, with thankful nights, be  
 mine.

## VII

But thou, Q Goddess ! in thy favourite Isle  
 (Freedom's impregnable redoubt,  
 The wide earth's store-house fenced about  
 With breakers roaring to the gales  
 That stretch a thousand thousand sails)  
 Quicken the slothful, and exalt the vile !—  
 Thy impulse is the life of Fame;  
 Glad Hope would almost cease to be  
 If torn from thy society;  
 And Love, when worstiest of his name,  
 Is proud to walk the earth with Thee !

1820.

ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS<sup>1</sup>

## IN SERIES

1821-22.

My purpose in writing this Series was, as much as possible, to confine my view to the introduction, progress, and operation of the Church in England, both previous and subsequent to the Reformation. The Sonnets were written long before ecclesiastical history and points of doctrine had excited the interest with which they have been recently enquired into and discussed. The former particular is mentioned as an excuse for my having fallen into error in respect to an incident which had been selected as setting forth the height to which the

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

power of the Popedom over temporal sovereignty had attained, and the arrogance with which it was displayed. I allude to the last Sonnet but one in the first series, where Pope Alexander the third at Venice is described as setting his foot on the neck of the Emperor Barbarossa. Though this is related as a fact in history, I am told it is a mere legend of no authority. Substitute for it an undeniable truth not less fitted for my purpose, namely, the penance inflicted by Gregory the Seventh upon the Emperor Henry the Fourth.

Before I conclude my notice of these Sonnets, let me observe that the opinion I pronounced in favour of Laud (long before the Oxford Tract movement) and which had brought censure upon me from several quarters, is not in the least changed. Omitting here to examine into his conduct in respect to the persecuting spirit with which he has been charged, I am persuaded that most of his aims to restore ritual practices which had been abandoned were good and wise, whatever errors he might commit in the manner he sometimes attempted to enforce them. I further believe that, had not he, and others who shared his opinions and felt as he did, stood up in opposition to the reformers of that period, it is questionable whether the Church would ever have recovered its lost ground and become the blessing it now is, and will, I trust, become in a still greater degree, both to those of its communion and to those who unfortunately are separated from it.

## PART I

## FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO BRITAIN, TO THE CONSUMMATION OF THE PAPAL DOMINION

"A verse may catch a wandering Soul, that flies  
 Profounder Tracts, and by a blest surprise  
 Convert delight into a Sacrifice."

## I

## INTRODUCTION

I, WHO accompanied with faithful pace  
 Cerulean Duddon from his cloud-fed spring,  
 And loved with spirit ruled by his to sing  
 Of mountain quiet and boon nature's grace;  
 I, who essayed the nobler Stream to trace  
 Of Liberty, and smote the plausible string  
 Till the checked torrent, proudly triumphing,  
 Won for herself a lasting resting-place;  
 Now seek upon the heights of Time the  
 source  
 Of a HOLY RIVER, on whose banks are  
 found

Sweet pastoral flowers, and laurels that  
have crowned  
Full oft the unworthy brow of lawless force;  
And, for delight of him who tracks its  
course,  
Immortal amaranth and palms abound.

## II

## CONJECTURES

If there be prophets on whose spirits rest  
Past things, revealed like future, they can  
tell  
What Powers, presiding o'er the sacred  
well  
Of Christian Faith, this savage Island  
blessed  
With its first bounty. Wandering through  
the west,  
Did holy Paul<sup>1</sup> a while in Britain dwell,  
And call the Fountain forth by miracle,  
And with dread signs the nascent Stream  
invest?  
Or He, whose bonds dropped off, whose  
prison doors  
Flew open, by an Angel's voice unbarred?  
Or some of humbler name, to these wild  
shores  
Storm-driven; who, having seen the cup of  
woe  
Pass from their Master, sojourned here to  
guard  
The precious Current they had taught to  
flow?

## III

## TREPIDATION OF THE DRUIDS

SCREAMS round the Arch-druid's brow the  
seamew<sup>2</sup>—white  
As Menai's foam; and toward the mystic  
ring  
Where Augurs stand, the Future question-  
ing,  
Slowly the cormorant aims her heavy flight,  
Portending ruin to each baleful rite,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

<sup>2</sup> This water-fowl was, among the Druids, an emblem of those traditions connected with the Deluge that made an important part of their mysteries. The Cormorant was a bird of bad omen.

That, in the lapse of ages, hath crept o'er  
Diluvian truths, and patriarchal lore.  
Haughty the Bard: can these meek doctrines  
blight

His transports? wither his heroic strains?  
But all shall be fulfilled;—the Julian spear  
A way first opened; and, with Roman  
chains,  
The tidings come of Jesus crucified;  
They come—they spread—the weak, the  
suffering, hear;  
Receive the faith, and in the hope abide.

## IV

## DRUIDICAL EXCOMMUNICATION

MERCY and Love have met thee on thy  
road,  
Thou wretched Outcast, from the gift of  
fire  
And food cut off by sacerdotal ire,  
From every sympathy that Man bestowed!  
Yet shall it claim our reverence, that to  
God,  
Ancient of days! that to the eternal Sire,  
These jealous Ministers of law aspire,  
As to the one sole fount whence wisdom  
flowed,  
Justice, and order. Tremblingly escaped,  
As if with prescience of the coming storm,  
That intimation when the stars were  
shaped;  
And still, 'mid yon thick woods, the primal  
truth  
Glimmers through many a superstitious  
form  
That fills the Soul with unavailing ruth.

## V

## UNCERTAINTY

DARKNESS surrounds us; seeking, we are  
lost  
On Snowdon's wilds, amid Brigantian  
coves,  
Or where the solitary shepherd roves  
Along the plain of Sarum, by the ghost  
Of Time and shadows of Tradition, crost;  
And where the boatman of the Western  
Isles  
Slackens his course—to mark those holy  
piles

Which yet survive on bleak Iona's coast.  
Nor these, nor monuments of eldest name,  
Nor Taliesin's unforgotten lays,  
Nor characters of Greek or Roman fame,  
To an unquestionable Source have led;  
Enough—if eyes, that sought the fountain-  
head  
In vain, upon the growing Rill may gaze.

VI

PERSECUTION

LAMENT! for Diocletian's fiery sword  
Works busy as the lightning; but instinct  
With malice ne'er to deadliest weapon  
linked

Which God's ethereal store-houses afford:  
Against the Followers of the incarnate Lord  
It rages; some are smitten in the field—  
Some pierced to the heart through the in-  
effectual shield

Of sacred home;—with pomp are others  
gored

And dreadful respite. Thus was Alban  
tried,

England's first Martyr, whom no threats  
could shake;

Self-offered victim, for his friend he died,  
And for the faith; nor shall his name for-  
sake

That Hill, whose flowery platform seems  
to rise

By Nature decked for holiest sacrifice.<sup>1</sup>

VII

RECOVERY

As, when a storm hath ceased, the birds  
regain

Their cheerfulness, and busily retrim  
Their nests, or chant a gratulating hymn  
To the blue ether and bespangled plain;  
Even so, in many a re-constructed fane,  
Have the survivors of this Storm renewed  
Their holy rites with vocal gratitude:  
And solemn ceremonials they ordain  
To celebrate their great deliverance;  
Most feelingly instructed 'mid their fear—  
That persecution, blind with rage extreme,

<sup>1</sup> See Note

May not the less, through Heaven's mild  
countenance,  
Even in her own despite, both feed and  
cheer;  
For all things are less dreadful than they  
seem.

VIII

TEMPTATIONS FROM ROMAN REFINEMENTS

WATCH, and be firm! for, soul-subduing  
vice,

Heart-killing luxury, on your steps await.  
Fair houses, baths, and banquets delicate,  
And temples flashing, bright as polar ice,  
Their radiance through the woods—may  
yet suffice

To sap your hardy virtue, and abate  
Your love of Him upon whose forehead sate  
The crown of thorns; whose life-blood  
flowed, the price

Of your redemption. Shun the insidious  
arts

That Rome provides, less dreading from  
her frown

Than from her wily praise, her peaceful  
gown,

Language, and letters;—these, though  
fondly viewed

As humanising graces, are but parts  
And instruments of deadliest servitude!

IX

DISSENSIONS

THAT heresies should strike (if truth be  
scanned

Presumptuously) their roots both wide and  
deep,

Is natural as dreams to feverish sleep.

Lo! Discord at the altar dares to stand

Uplifting toward high Heaven her fiery  
brand,

A cherished Priestess of the new-baptized!  
But chastisement shall follow peace de-  
spised.

The Pictish cloud darkens the enervate  
land

By Rome abandoned; vain are suppliant  
cries,

And prayers that would undo her forced  
farewell;



For she returns not.—Awed by her own  
knell,  
She casts the Britons upon strange Allies  
Soon to become more dreaded enemies  
Than heartless misery called them to repel.

## X

STRUGGLE OF THE BRITONS AGAINST THE  
BARBARIANS

RISE!—they *have* risen: of brave Aneurin  
ask  
How they have scourged old foes, perfidious  
friends:

The Spirit of Caractacus descends  
Upon the Patriots, animates their task;—  
Amazement runs before the towering casque  
Of Arthur, bearing through the stormy field  
The virgin sculptured on his Christian  
shield:—

Stretched in the sunny light of victory bask  
The Host that followed Urien as he strode  
O'er heaps of slain;—from Cambrian wood  
and moss

Druids descend, auxiliars of the Cross;  
Bards, nursed on blue Plinlimmon's still  
abode,

Rush on the fight, to harps preferring  
swords,

And everlasting deeds to burning words!

## XI

SAXON CONQUEST

NOR wants the cause the panic-striking aid  
Of hallelujahs<sup>1</sup> tost from hill to hill—  
For instant victory. But Heaven's high  
will

Permits a second and a darker shade  
Of Pagan night. Afflicted and dismayed,  
The Relics of the sword flee to the moun-  
tains:

O wretched Land! whose tears have flowed  
like fountains;

Whose arts and honours in the dust are laid  
By men yet scarcely conscious of a care  
For other monuments than those of Earth;<sup>1</sup>  
Who, as the fields and woods have given  
them birth,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Will build their savage fortunes only there;  
Content, if foss, and barrow, and the girth  
Of long-drawn rampart, witness what they  
were.

## XII

MONASTERY OF OLD BANGOR<sup>2</sup>

*THE oppression of the tumult—wrath and  
scorn—*

*The tribulation—and the gleaming blades—*  
Such is the impetuous spirit that pervades  
The song of Taliesin;—Ours shall mourn  
The *unarmed* Host who by their prayers  
would turn

The sword from Bangor's walls, and guard  
the store

Of Aboriginal and Roman lore,  
And Christian monuments, that now must  
burn

To senseless ashes. Mark! how all things  
swerve

From their known course, or vanish like a  
dream;

Another language spreads from coast to  
coast;

Only perchance some melancholy Stream  
And some indignant Hills old names pre-  
serve,

When laws, and creeds, and people all are  
lost!

## XIII

CASUAL INCITEMENT

A BRIGHT-HAIRED company of youthful  
slaves,

Beautiful strangers, stand within the pale  
Of a sad market, ranged for public sale,  
Where Tiber's stream the immortal City  
laves:

ANGEL by name; and not an ANGEL waves  
His wing who could seem lovelier to man's  
eye

Than they appear to holy Gregory;  
Who, having learnt that name, salvation  
craves

For Them, and for their Land. The  
earnest Sire,

His questions urging, feels, in slender ties  
Of chiming sound, commanding sympathies;

<sup>2</sup> See Note.

DE-IRIANS—he would save them from  
God's IRE;  
Subjects of Saxon ÆLLA—they shall sing  
Glad HALLE-lujahs to the eternal King!

## XIV

## GLAD TIDINGS

FOR ever hallowed be this morning fair,  
Blest be the unconscious shore on which  
ye tread,  
And blest the silver Cross, which ye, instead  
Of martial banner, in procession bear;  
The Cross preceding Him who floats in air,  
The pictured Saviour!—By Augustin led,  
They come—and onward travel without  
dread,  
Chanting in barbarous ears a tuneful  
prayer—  
Sung for themselves, and those whom they  
would free!  
Rich conquest waits them:—the tempestu-  
ous sea  
Of Ignorance, that ran so rough and high  
And heeded not the voice of clashing  
swords,  
These good men humble by a few bare  
words,  
And calm with fear of God's divinity.

## XV

PAULINUS<sup>1</sup>

BUT, to remote Northumbria's royal Hall,  
Where thoughtful Edwin, tutored in the  
school  
Of sorrow, still maintains a heathen rule,  
*Who* comes with functions apostolical?  
Mark him, of shoulders curved, and stature  
tall,  
Black hair, and vivid eye, and meagre  
cheek,  
His prominent feature like an eagle's beak;  
A Man whose aspect doth at once appal  
And strike with reverence. The Monarch  
leans  
Toward the pure truths this Delegate pro-  
pounds  
Repeatedly his own deep mind he sounds  
With careful hesitation,—then convenes  
A synod of his Councillors:—give ear,  
And what a pensive Sage doth utter, hear!

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XVI

## PERSUASION

"MAN's life is like a Sparrow, mighty  
King!  
"That—while at banquet with your Chiefs  
you sit  
"Housed near a blazing fire—is seen to  
flit  
"Safe from the wintry tempest. Fluttering,  
"Here did it enter; there, on hasty wing,  
"Flies out, and passes on from cold to  
cold;  
"But whence it came we know not, nor  
behold  
"Whither it goes. Even such, that  
transient Thing,  
"The human Soul; not utterly unknown  
"While in the Body lodged, her warm  
abode;  
"But from what world She came, what  
woe or weal  
"On her departure waits, no tongue hath  
shown;  
"This mystery if the Stranger can reveal,  
"His be a welcome cordially bestowed!"<sup>2</sup>

## XVII

## CONVERSION

PROMPT transformation works the novel  
Lore;  
The Council closed, the Priest in full career  
Rides forth, an armed man, and hurls a  
spear  
To desecrate the Fane which heretofore  
He served in folly. Woden falls, and  
Thor  
Is overturned; the mace, in battle heaved  
(So might they dream) till victory was  
achieved,  
Drops, and the God himself is seen no  
more.  
Temple and Altar sink, to hide their shame  
Amid oblivious weeds. "*O come to me,  
Ye heavy laden!*" such the inviting voice  
Heard near fresh streams;<sup>2</sup> and thousands,  
who rejoice  
In the new Rite, the pledge of sanctity,  
Shall, by regenerate life, the promise claim.

<sup>2</sup> See Note.

## XVIII

## APOLOGY

NOR scorn the aid which Fancy oft doth lend  
 The Soul's eternal interests to promote:  
 Death, darkness, danger, are our natural lot;  
 And evil Spirits *may* our walk attend  
 For aught the wisest know or comprehend;  
 Then be *good* Spirits free to breathe a note  
 Of elevation; let their odours float  
 Around these Converts; and their glories blend,  
 The midnight stars outshining, or the blaze  
 Of the noon-day. Nor doubt that golden cords  
 Of good works, mingling with the visions,  
 raise  
 The Soul to purer worlds: and *who* the line  
 Shall draw, the limits of the power define,  
 That even imperfect faith to man affords?

## XIX

PRIMITIVE SAXON CLERGY<sup>1</sup>

How beautiful your presence, how benign,  
 Servants of God! who not a thought will share  
 With the vain world; who, outwardly as bare  
 As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign  
 That the firm soul is clothed with fruit divine!  
 Such Priest, when service worthy of his care  
 Has called him forth to breathe the common air,  
 Might seem a saintly Image from its shrine  
 Descended:—happy are the eyes that meet  
 The Apparition; evil thoughts are stayed  
 At his approach, and low-bowed necks entreat  
 A benediction from his voice or hand;  
 Whence grace, through which the heart can understand,  
 And vows, that bind the will, in silence made.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XX

## OTHER INFLUENCES

AH, when the Body, round which in love  
 we clung,  
 Is chilled by death, does mutual service fail?  
 Is tender pity then of no avail?  
 Are intercessions of the fervent tongue  
 A waste of hope?—From this sad source  
 have sprung  
 Rites that console the Spirit, under grief  
 Which ill can brook more rational relief:  
 Hence, prayers are shaped amiss, and dirges sung  
 For Souls whose doom is fixed! The way  
 is smooth  
 For Power that travels with the human heart:  
 Confession ministers the pang to soothe  
 In him who at the ghost of guilt doth start.  
 Ye holy Men, so earnest in your care,  
 Of your own mighty instruments beware!

## XXI

## SECLUSION

LANCE, shield, and sword relinquished, at  
 his side  
 A bead-roll, in his hand a clasped book,  
 Or staff more harmless than a shepherd's  
 crook,  
 The war-worn Chieftain quits the world—  
 to hide  
 His thin autumnal locks where Monks abide  
 In cloistered privacy. But not to dwell  
 In soft repose he comes: within his cell,  
 Round the decaying trunk of human pride,  
 At morn, and eve, and midnight's silent hour,  
 Do penitential cogitations cling;  
 Like ivy, round some ancient elm, they  
 twine  
 In grisly folds and strictures serpentine;  
 Yet, while they strangle, a fair growth they  
 bring,  
 For recompence—their own perennial  
 bower.

## XXII

## CONTINUED

METHINKS that to some vacant hermitage  
 My feet would rather turn—to some dry  
 nook

Scooped out of living rock, and near a brook  
Hurled down a mountain-cove from stage  
to stage,

Yet tempering, for my sight, its bustling  
rage

In the soft heaven of a translucent pool;  
Thence creeping under sylvan arches cool,  
Fit haunt of shapes whose glorious equipage  
Would elevate my dreams. A beechen bowl,  
A maple dish, my furniture should be;  
Crisp, yellow leaves my bed; the hooting  
owl

My night-watch: nor should e'er the crested  
fowl

From thorp or vill his matins sound for me,  
Tired of the world and all its industry.

## XXIII

## REPROOF

BUT what if One, through grove or flowery  
mead,

Indulging thus at will the creeping feet  
Of a voluptuous indolence, should meet  
Thy hovering Shade, O venerable Bede!  
The saint, the scholar, from a circle freed  
Of toil stupendous, in a hallowed seat  
Of learning, where thou heard'st the billows  
beat

On a wild coast, rough monitors to feed  
Perpetual industry. Sublime Recluse!  
The recreant soul, that dares to shun the  
debt

Imposed on human kind, must first forget  
Thy diligence, thy unrelaxing use  
Of a long life; and, in the hour of death,  
The last dear service of thy passing breath!<sup>1</sup>

## XXIV

SAXON MONASTERIES, AND LIGHTS AND  
SHADES OF THE RELIGION

By such examples moved to unbought pains,  
The people work like congregated bees;<sup>2</sup>  
Eager to build the quiet Fortresses  
Where Piety, as they believe, obtains  
From Heaven a *general* blessing; timely  
rains

<sup>1</sup> He expired dictating the last words of a translation of St. John's Gospel.      <sup>2</sup> See Note.

Or needful sunshine; prosperous enterprise,  
Justice and peace:—bold faith! yet also rise  
The sacred Structures for less doubtful gains.  
The Sensual think with reverence of the  
palms

Which the chaste Votaries seek, beyond the  
grave

If penance be redeemable, thence alms  
Flow to the poor, and freedom to the slave;  
And if full oft the Sanctuary save  
Lives black with guilt, ferocity it calms.

## XXV

## MISSIONS AND TRAVELS

NOT sedentary all: there are who roam  
To scatter seeds of life on barbarous shores;  
Or quit with zealous step their knee-worn  
floors

To seek the general mart of Christendom;  
Whence they, like richly-laden merchants,  
come

To their beloved cells:—or shall we say  
That, like the Red-cross Knight, they urge  
their way,

To lead in memorable triumph home  
Truth, their immortal Una? Babylon,  
Learned and wise, hath perished utterly,  
Nor leaves her Speech one word to aid the  
sigh

That would lament her;—Memphis, Tyre,  
are gone

With all their Arts,—but classic lore glides on  
By these Religious saved for all posterity.

## XXVI

## ALFRED

BEHOLD a pupil of the monkish gown,  
The pious ALFRED, King to Justice dear!  
Lord of the harp and liberating spear;  
Mirror of Princes! Indigent Renown  
Might range the starry ether for a crown  
Equal to *his* deserts, who, like the year,  
Pours forth his bounty, like the day doth  
cheer,

And awes like night with mercy-tempered  
frown.

Ease from this noble miser of his time  
No moment steals; pain narrows not his  
cares.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Note.

Though small his kingdom as a spark or  
gem,  
Of Alfred boasts remote Jerusalem,  
And Christian India, through her wide-  
spread clime,  
In sacred converse gifts with Alfred shares.

## XXVII

## HIS DESCENDANTS

WHEN thy great soul was freed from mortal  
chains,  
Darling of England! many a bitter shower  
Fell on thy tomb; but emulative power  
Flowed in thy line through undegenerate  
veins.  
The Race of Alfred covet glorious pains  
When dangers threaten, dangers ever new!  
Black tempests bursting, blacker still in  
view!  
But manly sovereignty its hold retains;  
The root sincere, the branches bold to strive  
With the fierce tempest, while, within the  
round  
Of their protection, gentle virtues thrive;  
As oft, 'mid some green plot of open ground,  
Wide as the oak extends its dewy gloom,  
The fostered hyacinths spread their purple  
bloom.

## XXVIII

## INFLUENCE ABUSED

URGED by Ambition, who with subtlest  
skill  
Changes her means, the Enthusiast as a  
dupe  
Shall soar, and as a hypocrite can stoop,  
And turn the instruments of good to ill,  
Moulding the credulous people to his will.  
Such DUNSTAN:—from its Benedictine coop  
Issues the master Mind, at whose fell swoop  
The chaste affections tremble to fulfil  
Their purposes. Behold, pre-signified,  
The Might of spiritual sway! his thoughts,  
his dreams,  
Do in the supernatural world abide:  
So vaunt a throng of Followers, filled with  
pride  
In what they see of virtues pushed to  
extremes,  
And sorceries of talent misapplied.

## XXIX

## DANISH CONQUESTS

WOE to the Crown that doth the Cowl  
obey!<sup>1</sup>  
Dissension, checking arms that would re-  
strain  
The incessant Rovers of the northern main,  
Helps to restore and spread a Pagan sway:  
But Gospel-truth is potent to allay  
Fierceness and rage; and soon the cruel  
Dane  
Feels, through the influence of her gentle  
reign,  
His native superstitions melt away.  
Thus, often, when thick gloom the east  
o'ershrouds,  
The full-orbed Moon, slow-climbing, doth  
appear  
Silently to consume the heavy clouds;  
*How* no one can resolve; but every eye  
Around her sees, while air is hushed, a  
clear  
And widening circuit of ethereal sky.

## XXX

## CANUTE

A PLEASANT music floats along the Mere,  
From Monks in Ely chanting service high,  
While-as Canùte the King is rowing by:  
"My Oarsmen," quoth the mighty King,  
"draw near,  
"That we the sweet song of the Monks may  
hear!"  
He listens (all past conquests, and all  
schemes  
Of future, vanishing like empty dreams)  
Heart-touched, and haply not without a  
tear.  
The Royal Minstrel, ere the choir is still,  
While his free Barge skims the smooth  
flood along,  
Gives to that rapture an accordant Rhyme.<sup>2</sup>  
O suffering Earth! be thankful: sternest  
clime  
And rudest age are subject to the thrill  
Of heaven-descended Piety and Song.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.<sup>2</sup> Which is still extant.

## XXXI

## THE NORMAN CONQUEST

THE woman-hearted Confessor prepares  
 The evanescence of the Saxon line.  
 Hark! 'tis the tolling Curfew!—the stars  
   shine;  
 But of the lights that cherish household  
   cares  
 And festive gladness, burns not one that  
   dares  
 To twinkle after that dull stroke of thine,  
 Emblem and instrument, from Thames to  
   Tyne,  
 Of force that daunts, and cunning that  
   ensnares!  
 Yet as the terrors of the lordly bell,  
 That quench, from hut to palace, lamps  
   and fires,  
 Touch not the tapers of the sacred quires;  
 Even so a thralldom, studious to expel  
 Old laws, and ancient customs to de-  
   range,  
 To Creed or Ritual brings no fatal change.

## XXXII

COLDLY we spake. The Saxons, over-  
   powered  
 By wrong triumphant through its own  
   excess,  
 From fields laid waste, from house and  
   home devoured  
 By flames, look up to heaven and crave  
   redress  
 From God's eternal justice. Pitiless  
 Though men be, there are angels that can  
   feel  
 For wounds that death alone has power to  
   heal,  
 For penitent guilt, and innocent distress.  
 And has a Champion risen in arms to try  
 His Country's virtue, fought, and breathes  
   no more;  
 Him in their hearts the people canonize;  
 And far above the mine's most precious  
   ore  
 The least small pittance of bare mould they  
   prize  
 Scooped from the sacred earth where his  
   dear relics lie.

## XXXIII

## THE COUNCIL OF CLERMONT

"AND shall," the Pontiff asks, "profane-  
   ness flow  
 "From Nazareth—source of Christian piety,  
 "From Bethlehem, from the Mounts of  
   Agony  
 "And glorified Ascension? Warriors, go,  
 "With prayers and blessings we your path  
   will sow;  
 "Like Moses hold our hands erect, till ye  
 "Have chased far off by righteous victory  
 "These sons of Amalek, or laid them  
   low!"—  
 "GOD WILLETH IT," the whole assembly  
   cry;  
 Shout which the enraptured multitude  
   astounds!  
 The Council-roof and Clermont's towers  
   reply;—  
 "God willeth it," from hill to hill rebounds,  
 And, in awe-stricken Countries far and nigh,  
 Through "Nature's hollow arch" that voice  
   resounds.<sup>1</sup>

## XXXIV

## CRUSADES

THE turbaned Race are poured in thicken-  
   ing swarms  
 Along the west; though driven from Aqi-  
   taine,  
 The Crescent glitters on the towers of Spain;  
 And soft Italia feels renewed alarms;  
 The scimitar, that yields not to the charms  
 Of ease, the narrow Bosphorus will disdain;  
 Nor long (that crossed) would Grecian hills  
   detai  
 Their tents, and check the current of their  
   arms.  
 Then blame not those who, by the mightiest  
   lever  
 Known to the moral world, Imagination,  
 Upheave, so seems it, from her natural  
   station  
 All Christendom:—they sweep along (was  
   never  
 So huge a host!)—to tear from the Un-  
   believer  
 The precious Tomb, their haven of salvation.

<sup>1</sup> The decision of this council was believed to be instantly known in remote parts of Europe.

XXXV

RICHARD I

REDOUBTED King, of courage leonine,  
I mark thee, Richard ! urgent to equip  
Thy warlike person with the staff and scrip ;  
I watch thee sailing o'er the midland brine ;  
In conquered Cyprus see thy Bride decline  
Her blushing cheek, love-vows upon her lip,  
And see love-emblems streaming from thy  
ship,

As thence she holds her way to Palestine.  
My Song, a fearless homager, would attend  
Thy thundering battle-axe as it cleaves the  
press

Of war, but duty summons her away  
To tell—how, finding in the rash distress  
Of those Enthusiasts a subservient friend,  
To giddier heights hath clomb the Papal  
sway.

XXXVI

AN INTERDICT

REALMS quake by turns: proud Arbitress  
of grace,  
The Church, by mandate shadowing forth  
the power

She arrogates o'er heaven's eternal door,  
Closes the gates of every sacred place.  
Straight from the sun and tainted air's  
embrace

All sacred things are covered: cheerful  
morn

Grows sad as night—no seemly garb is  
worn,

Nor is a face allowed to meet a face  
With natural smiles of greeting. Bells are  
dumb;

Ditches are graves—funereal rites denied;  
And in the churchyard he must take his  
bride

Who dares be wedded ! Fancies thickly  
come

Into the pensive heart ill fortified,  
And comfortless despairs the soul benumb.

XXXVII

PAPAL ABUSES

As with the Stream our voyage we pursue,  
The gross materials of this world present

A marvellous study of wild accident ;  
Uncouth proximities of old and new ;  
And bold transfigurations, more untrue  
(As might be deemed) to disciplined intent  
Than aught the sky's fantastic element,  
When most fantastic, offers to the view.  
Saw we not Henry scourged at Becket's  
shrine ?

Lo ! John self-stripped of his insignia :—  
crown,

Sceptre and mantle, sword and ring, laid  
down

At a proud Legate's feet ! The spears that  
line

Baronial halls, the opprobrious insult feel ;  
And angry Ocean roars a vain appeal.

XXXVIII

SCENE IN VENICE

BLACK Demons hovering o'er his mitred  
head,

To Caesar's Successor the Pontiff spake ;  
" Ere I absolve thee, stoop ! that on thy  
neck

" Levelled with earth this foot of mine may  
tread."

Then he, who to the altar had been led,  
He, whose strong arm the Orient could not  
check,

He, who had held the Soldan at his beck,  
Stooped, of all glory disinherited,  
And even the common dignity of man !—  
Amazement strikes the crowd : while many  
turn

Their eyes away in sorrow, others burn  
With scorn, invoking a vindictive ban  
From outraged Nature ; but the sense of  
most

In abject sympathy with power is lost.

XXXIX

PAPAL DOMINION

UNLESS to Peter's Chair the viewless wind  
Must come and ask permission when to  
blow,

What further empire would it have ? for  
now

A ghostly Domination, unconfined  
As that by dreaming Bards to Love assigned,

Sits there in sober truth—to raise the low,  
Perplex the wise, the strong to overthrow;  
Through earth and heaven to bind and to  
unbind!—

Resist—the thunder quails thee!—crouch  
—rebuff

Shall be thy recompence! from land to land  
The ancient thrones of Christendom are stuff  
For occupation of a magic wand,  
And 'tis the Pope that wields it:—whether  
rough

Or smooth his front, our world is in his  
hand!

## PART II

TO THE CLOSE OF THE TROUBLES IN THE  
REIGN OF CHARLES I

## I

How soon—alas! did Man, created pure—  
By Angels guarded, deviate from the line  
Prescribed to duty:—woeful forfeiture  
He made by wilful breach of law divine.  
With like perverseness did the Church  
abjure

Obedience to her Lord, and haste to twine,  
'Mid Heaven-born flowers that shall for aye  
endure,

Weeds on whose front the world had fixed  
her sign.

O Man,—if with thy trials thus it fares,  
If good can smooth the way to evil choice,  
From all rash censure be the mind kept  
free;

He only judges right who weighs, compares,  
And in the sternest sentence which his voice  
Pronounces, ne'er abandons Charity.

## II

FROM false assumption rose, and, fondly  
hailed

By superstition, spread the Papal power;  
Yet do not deem the Autocracy prevailed  
Thus only, even in error's darkest hour.  
She daunts, forth-thundering from her  
spiritual tower,

Brute rapine, or with gentle lure she tames.  
Justice and Peace through Her uphold their  
claims;

And Chastity finds many a sheltering bower.

Realm there is none that if controlled or  
swayed

By her commands partakes not, in degree,  
Of good, o'er manners arts and arms,  
diffused:

Yes, to thy domination, Roman See,  
Tho' miserably, oft monstrously, abused  
By blind ambition, be this tribute paid.

## III

## CISTERTIAN MONASTERY

"*HERE Man more purely lives, less oft  
doth fall,*

"*More promptly rises, walks with stricter  
heed,*

"*More safely rests, dies happier, is freed*

"*Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains  
withal*

"*A brighter crown.*"<sup>1</sup>—On yon Cistercian  
wall

That confident assurance may be read;  
And, to like shelter, from the world have  
fled

Increasing multitudes. The potent call  
Doubtless shall cheat full oft the heart's  
desires;

Yet, while the rugged Age on pliant knee  
Vows to rapt Fancy humble fealty,  
A gentler life spreads round the holy spires;  
Where'er they rise, the sylvan waste retires,  
And æry harvests crown the fertile lea.

## IV

DEPLORABLE his lot who tills the ground,  
His whole life long tills it, with heartless toil  
Of villain-service, passing with the soil  
To each new Master, like a steer or hound,  
Or like a rooted tree, or stone earth-bound;  
But mark how gladly, through their own  
domains,

The Monks relax or break these iron chains;  
While Mercy, uttering, through their voice,  
a sound

Echoed in Heaven, cries out, "Ye Chiefs,  
abate

These legalized oppressions! Man—whose  
name

And nature God disdained not; Man—  
whose soul

<sup>1</sup> See Note.



Christ died for—cannot forfeit his high claim  
To live and move exempt from all control  
Which fellow-feeling doth not mitigate !”

## V

## MONKS AND SCHOOLMEN

RECORD we too, with just and faithful pen,  
That many hooded Cenobites there are,  
Who in their private cells have yet a care  
Of public quiet ; unambitious Men,  
Counsellors for the world, of piercing ken ;  
Whose fervent exhortations from afar  
Move Princes to their duty, peace or war ;  
And oft-times in the most forbidding den  
Of solitude, with love of science strong,  
How patiently the yoke of thought they bear  
How subtly glide its finest threads along !  
Spirits that crowd the intellectual sphere  
With mazy boundaries, as the astronomer  
With orb and cycle girds the starry throng.

## VI

## OTHER BENEFITS

AND, not in vain embodied to the sight,  
Religion finds even in the stern retreat  
Of feudal sway her own appropriate seat ;  
From the collegiate pomps on Windsor's height  
Down to the humbler altar, which the Knight  
And his retainers of the embattled hall  
Seek in domestic oratory small,  
For prayer in stillness, or the chanted rite ;  
Then chiefly dear, when foes are planted round,  
Who teach the intrepid guardians of the place—  
Hourly exposed to death, with famine worn,  
And suffering under many a perilous wound—  
How sad would be their durance, if forlorn  
Of offices dispensing heavenly grace !

## VII

## CONTINUED

AND what melodious sounds at times pre-  
vail !

And, ever and anon, how bright a gleam  
Pours on the surface of the turbid Stream !  
What heartfelt fragrance mingles with the gale

That swells the bosom of our passing sail !  
For where, but on *this* River's margin, blow  
Those flowers of chivalry, to bind the brow  
Of hardihood with wreaths that shall not fail ?—

Fair Court of Edward ! wonder of the world !

I see a matchless blazonry unfurled  
Of wisdom, magnanimity, and love ;  
And meekness tempering honourable pride ;  
The lamb is couching by the lion's side,  
And near the flame-eyed eagle sits the dove.

## VIII

## CRUSADERS

FURL we the sails, and pass with tardy oars  
Through these bright regions, casting many a glance

Upon the dream-like issues—the romance  
Of many-coloured life that Fortune pours  
Round the Crusaders, till on distant shores  
Their labours end ; or they return to lie,  
The vow performed, in cross-legged effigy,  
Devoutly stretched upon their chancel floors.  
Am I deceived ? Or is their requiem chanted

By voices never mute when Heaven unties  
Her inmost, softest, tenderest harmonies ;  
Requiem which Earth takes up with voice undaunted,

When she would tell how Brave, and Good, and Wise,  
For their high guerdon not in vain have panted !

## IX

As faith thus sanctified the warrior's crest  
While from the Papal Unity there came,  
What feebler means had failed to give, one aim

Diffused thro' all the regions of the West ;  
So does her Unity its power attest  
By works of Art, that shed, on the outward frame

Of worship, glory and grace, which who shall blame

That ever looked to heaven for final rest ?

Hail countless Temples ! that so well befit  
Your ministry ; that, as ye rise and take  
Form spirit and character from holy writ,  
Give to devotion, wheresoe'er awake,  
Pinions of high and higher sweep, and make  
The unconverted soul with awe submit.

## X

WHERE long and deeply hath been fixed  
the root

In the blest soil of gospel truth, the Tree,  
(Blighted or scathed tho' many branches be,  
Put forth to wither, many a hopeful shoot)  
Can never cease to bear celestial fruit.  
Witness the Church that oft-times, with  
effect

Dear to the saints, strives earnestly to eject  
Her bane, her vital energies recruit.  
Lamenting, do not hopelessly repine,  
When such good work is doomed to be  
undone,

The conquests lost that were so hardily  
won :—

All promises vouchsafed by Heaven will  
shine

In light confirmed while years their course  
shall run,

Confirmed alike in progress and decline.

## XI

## TRANSUBSTANTIATION

ENOUGH ! for see, with dim association  
The tapers burn ; the odorous incense feeds  
A greedy flame ; the pompous mass pro-  
ceeds ;

The Priest bestows the appointed consecra-  
tion ;

And, while the HOST is raised, its elevation  
An awe and supernatural horror breeds ;  
And all the people bow their heads, like  
reeds

To a soft breeze, in lowly adoration.

This Valdo brooks not. On the banks of  
Rhône

He taught, till persecution chased him  
thence,

To adore the Invisible, and Him alone.

Nor are his Followers loth to seek defence,  
'Mid woods and wilds, on Nature's craggy  
throne,

From rites that trample upon soul and sense.

## XII

## THE VAUDOIS

BUT whence came they who for the Saviour  
Lord

Have long borne witness as the Scriptures  
teach ?—

Agas ere Valdo raised his voice to preach

In Gallic ears the unadulterate Word,

Their fugitive Progenitors explored

Subalpine vales, in quest of safe retreats

Where that pure Church survives, though  
summer heats

Open a passage to the Romish sword,

Far as it dares to follow. Herbs self-sown,

And fruitage gathered from the chestnut  
wood,

Nourish the sufferers then ; and mists, that  
brood

O'er chasms with new-fallen obstacles be-  
strewn,

Protect them ; and the eternal snow that  
daunts

Aliens, is God's good winter for their haunts.

## XIII

PAISED be the Rivers, from their moun-  
tain springs

Shouting to Freedom, " Plant thy banners  
here ! "

To harassed Piety, " Dismiss thy fear,

And in our caverns smooth thy ruffled  
wings ! "

Nor be unthanked their final lingerings—

Silent, but not to high-souled Passion's  
ear—

'Mid reedy fens wide-spread and marshes  
dear,

Their own creation. Such glad welcom-  
ings

As Po was heard to give where Venice  
rose

Hailed from aloft those Heirs of truth divine

Who near his fountains sought obscure  
repose,

Yet came prepared as glorious lights to  
shine,

Should that be needed for their sacred  
Charge ;

Blest Prisoners They, whose spirits were at  
large !

## XIV

## WALDENSES

THOSE had given earliest notice, as the lark  
 Springs from the ground the morn to gratulate;  
 Or rather rose the day to antedate,  
 By striking out a solitary spark,  
 When all the world with midnight gloom  
 was dark. —  
 Then followed the Waldensian bands, whom  
 Hate  
 In vain endeavours to exterminate,  
 Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous  
 bark:<sup>1</sup>  
 But they desist not;—and the sacred fire,  
 Rekindled thus, from dens and savage  
 woods  
 Moves, handed on with never-ceasing care,  
 Through courts, through camps, o'er limit-  
 ary floods;  
 Nor lacks this sea-girt Isle a timely share  
 Of the new Flame, not suffered to expire.

## XV

## ARCHBISHOP CHICHELY TO HENRY V

"WHAT beast in wilderness or cultured  
 field  
 "The lively beauty of the leopard shows?  
 "What flower in meadow-ground or garden  
 grows  
 "That to the towering lily doth not yield?  
 "Let both meet only on thy royal shield!  
 "Go forth, great King! claim what thy  
 birth bestows;  
 "Conquer the Gallic lily which thy foes  
 "Dare to usurp;—thou hast a sword to  
 wield,  
 "And Heaven will crown the right."—The  
 mitred Sire  
 Thus spake—and lo! a Fleet, for Gaul  
 address,  
 Ploughs her bold course across the wonder-  
 ing seas;  
 For, sooth to say, ambition, in the breast  
 Of youthful heroes, is no sullen fire,  
 But one that leaps to meet the fanning  
 breeze.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XVI

## WARS OF YORK AND LANCASTER

THUS is the storm abated by the craft  
 Of a shrewd Counsellor, eager to protect  
 The Church, whose power hath recently  
 been checked,  
 Whose monstrous riches threatened. So  
 the shaft  
 Of victory mounts high, and blood is quaffed  
 In fields that rival Cressy and Poitiers—  
 Pride to be washed away by bitter tears!  
 For deep as Hell itself, the avenging draught  
 Of civil slaughter. Yet, while temporal  
 power  
 Is by these shocks exhausted, spiritual truth  
 Maintains the else endangered gift of life;  
 Proceeds from infancy to lusty youth;  
 And, under cover of this woeful strife,  
 Gathers unblighted strength from hour to  
 hour.

## XVII

## WICLIFFE

ONCE more the Church is seized with sudden  
 fear,  
 And at her call is Wicliffe disinhumed:  
 Yea, his dry bones to ashes are consumed  
 And flung into the brook that travels near;  
 Forthwith, that ancient Voice which Streams  
 can hear  
 Thus speaks (that Voice which walks upon  
 the wind,  
 Though seldom heard by busy human  
 kind)—  
 "As thou these ashes, little Brook! wilt  
 bear  
 "Into the Avon, Avon to the tide  
 "Of Severn, Severn to the narrow seas,  
 "Into main Ocean they, this deed accurst  
 "An emblem yields to friends and enemies  
 "How the bold Teacher's Doctrine, sanc-  
 tified  
 "By truth, shall spread, throughout the  
 world dispersed."

## XVIII

## CORRUPTIONS OF THE HIGHER CLERGY

"Woe to you, Prelates! rioting in ease  
 "And cumbrous wealth—the shame of  
 your estate;

"You, on whose progress dazzling trains  
await  
"Of pompous horses; whom vain titles  
please;  
"Who will be served by others on their  
knees,  
"Yet will yourselves to God no service pay;  
"Pastors who neither take nor point the  
way  
"To Heaven; for, either lost in vanities  
"Ye have no skill to teach, or if ye know  
"And speak the word—" Alas! of  
fearful things  
'Tis the most fearful when the people's eye  
Abuse hath cleared from vain imaginings;  
And taught the general voice to prophesy  
Of justice armed, and Pride to be laid low.

## XIX

## ABUSE OF MONASTIC POWER

AND what is Penance with her knotted  
thong;  
Mortification with the shirt of hair,  
Wan cheek, and knees indurated with  
prayer,  
Vigils, and fastings rigorous as long;  
If cloistered Avarice scruple not to wrong  
The pious, humble, useful Secular,  
And rob the people of his daily care,  
Scorning that world whose blindness makes  
her strong?  
Inversion strange! that, unto One who  
lives  
For self, and struggles with himself alone,  
The amplest share of heavenly favour  
gives;  
That to a Monk allots, both in the esteem  
Of God and man, place higher than to him  
Who on the good of others builds his own!

## XX

## MONASTIC VOLUPTUOUSNESS

YET more,—round many a Convent's blaz-  
ing fire  
Unhallowed threads of revelry are spun;  
There Venus sits disguised like a Nun,—  
While Bacchus, clothed in semblance of a  
Friar,  
Pours out his choicest beverage high and  
higher

Sparkling, until it cannot choose but run  
Over the bowl, whose silver lip hath won  
An instant kiss of masterful desire—  
To stay the precious waste. Through  
every brain  
The domination of the sprightly juice  
Spreads high conceits to maddening Fancy  
dear,  
Till the arched roof, with resolute abuse  
Of its grave echoes, swells a choral strain,  
Whose votive burthen is—"OUR KING-  
DOM'S HERE!"

## XXI

## DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES

THREATS come which no submission may  
assuage,  
No sacrifice avert, no power dispute;  
The tapers shall be quenched, the belfries  
mute,  
And, 'mid their choirs unroofed by selfish  
rage,  
The warbling wren shall find a leafy cage;  
The gadding bramble hang her purple  
fruit;  
And the green lizard and the gilded newt  
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.<sup>1</sup>  
The owl of evening and the woodland fox  
For their abode the shrines of Waltham  
choose:  
Proud Glastonbury can no more refuse  
To stoop her head before these desperate  
shocks—  
She whose high pomp displaced, as story  
tells,  
Arimathean Joseph's wattled cells.

## XXII

## THE SAME SUBJECT

THE lovely Nun (submissive, but more  
meek  
Through saintly habit than from effort due  
To unrelenting mandates that pursue  
With equal wrath the steps of strong and  
weak)  
Goes forth—unveiling timidly a cheek  
Suffused with blushes of celestial hue,  
While through the Convent's gate to open  
view

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Softly she glides, another home to seek.  
 Not Iris, issuing from her cloudy shrine,  
 An Apparition more divinely bright!  
 Not more attractive to the dazzled sight  
 Those watery glories, on the stormy brine  
 Poured forth, while summer suns at distance shine,  
 And the green vales lie hushed in sober light!

## XXIII

## CONTINUED

YET many a Novice of the cloistral shade,  
 And many chained by vows, with eager glee  
 The warrant hail, exulting to be free;  
 Like ships before whose keels, full long embayed  
 In polar ice, propitious winds have made  
 Unlooked-for outlet to an open sea,  
 Their liquid world, for bold discovery,  
 In all her quarters temptingly displayed!  
 Hope guides the young; but when the old must pass  
 The threshold, whither shall they turn to find  
 The hospitality—the alms (alas!  
 Alms may be needed) which that House bestowed?  
 Can they, in faith and worship, train the mind  
 To keep this new and questionable road?

## XXIV

## SAINTS

YE, too, must fly before a chasing hand,  
 Angels and Saints, in every hamlet mourned!  
 Ah! if the old idolatry be spurned,  
 Let not your radiant Shapes desert the Land:  
 Her adoration was not your demand,  
 The fond heart proffered it—the servile heart;  
 And therefore are ye summoned to depart,  
 Michael, and thou, St. George, whose flaming brand  
 The Dragon quelled; and valiant Margaret  
 Whose rival sword a like Opponent slew:

And rapt Cecilia seraph-haunted Queen  
 Of harmony; and weeping Magdalene,  
 Who in the penitential desert met  
 Gales sweet as those that over Eden blew!

## XXV

## THE VIRGIN

MOTHER! whose virgin bosom was uncrossed  
 With the least shade of thought to sin allied;  
 Woman! above all women glorified,  
 Our tainted nature's solitary boast;  
 Purer than foam on central ocean tost;  
 Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn  
 With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon  
 Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast;  
 Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,  
 Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,  
 As to a visible Power, in which did blend  
 All that was mixed and reconciled in Thee  
 Of mother's love with maiden purity,  
 Of high with low, celestial with terrene!

## XXVI

## APOLOGY

NOT utterly unworthy to endure  
 Was the supremacy of crafty Rome;  
 Age after age to the arch of Christendom  
 Atrial keystone haughtily secure;  
 Supremacy from Heaven transmitted pure,  
 As many hold; and, therefore, to the tomb  
 Pass, some through fire—and by the scaffold some—  
 Like saintly Fisher, and unbending More.  
 "Lightly for both the bosom's lord did sit  
 "Upon his throne;" unsoftened, undis-mayed  
 By aught that mingled with the tragic scene  
 Of pity or fear: and More's gay genius played  
 With the inoffensive sword of native wit,  
 Than the bare axe more luminous and keen.

## XXVII

## IMAGINATIVE REGRETS

DEEP is the lamentation ! Not alone  
 From Sages justly honoured by mankind ;  
 But from the ghostly tenants of the wind,  
 Demons and Spirits, many a dolorous groan  
 Issues for that dominion overthrown :  
 Proud Tiber grieves, and far-off Ganges,  
 blind  
 As his own worshippers : and Nile, reclined  
 Upon his monstrous urn, the farewell moan  
 Renews. Through every forest, cave, and  
 den,  
 Where frauds were hatched of old, hath  
 sorrow past—  
 Hangs o'er the Arabian Prophet's native  
 Waste,  
 Where once his airy helpers schemed and  
 planned  
 'Mid spectral lakes bemocking thirsty men,  
 And stalking pillars built of fiery sand.

## XXVIII

## REFLECTIONS

GRANT, that by this unsparing hurricane  
 Green leaves with yellow mixed are torn  
 away,  
 And goodly fruitage with the mother spray ;  
 'Twere madness—wished we, therefore, to  
 detain,  
 With hands stretched forth in mollified  
 disdain,  
 The "trumpety" that ascends in bare dis-  
 play—  
 Bulls, pardons, relics, crows black, white,  
 and grey—  
 Upwhirled, and flying o'er the ethereal plain  
 Fast bound for Limbo Lake. And yet not  
 choice  
 But habit rules the unreflecting herd,  
 And airy bonds are hardest to disown ;  
 Hence, with the spiritual sovereignty trans-  
 ferred  
 Unto itself, the Crown assumes a voice  
 Of reckless mastery, hitherto unknown.

## XXIX

## TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

BUT, to outweigh all harm, the sacred Book,  
 In dusty sequestration wrapt too long,

Assumes the accents of our native tongue ;  
 And he who guides the plough, or wields  
 the crook,  
 With understanding spirit now may look  
 Upon her records, listen to her song,  
 And sift her laws—much wondering that the  
 wrong,  
 Which Faith has suffered, Heaven could  
 calmly brook.  
 Transcendent boon ! noblest that earthly  
 King  
 Ever bestowed to equalize and bless  
 Under the weight of mortal wretchedness !  
 But passions spread like plagues, and  
 thousands wild  
 With bigotry shall tread the Offering  
 Beneath their feet, detested and defiled.

## XXX

## THE POINT AT ISSUE

FOR what contend the wise?—for nothing  
 less  
 Than that the Soul, freed from the bonds  
 of Sense,  
 And to her God restored by evidence  
 Of things not seen, drawn forth from their  
 recess,  
 Root there, and not in forms, her holiness ;—  
 For Faith, which to the Patriarchs did dis-  
 pense  
 Sure guidance, ere a ceremonial fence  
 Was needful round men thirsting to trans-  
 gress ;—  
 For Faith, more perfect still, with which  
 the Lord  
 Of all, himself a Spirit, in the youth  
 Of Christian aspiration, deigned to fill  
 The temples of their hearts who, with his  
 word  
 Informed, were resolute to do his will,  
 And worship him in spirit and in truth.

## XXXI

## EDWARD VI

"SWEET is the holiness of Youth"—so felt  
 Time-honoured Chaucer speaking through  
 that Lay  
 By which the Prioress beguiled the way,  
 And many a Pilgrim's rugged heart did  
 melt.

Hadst thou, loved Bard! whose spirit  
often dwelt

In the clear land of vision, but foreseen  
King, child, and seraph, blended in the  
mien

Of pious Edward kneeling as he knelt  
In meek and simple infancy, what joy  
For universal Christendom had thrilled  
Thy heart! what hopes inspired thy genius,  
skilled

(O great Precursor, genuine morning Star)  
The lucid shafts of reason to employ,  
Piercing the Papal darkness from afar!

## XXXII

EDWARD SIGNING THE WARRANT FOR  
THE EXECUTION OF JOAN OF KENT

THE tears of man in various measure gush  
From various sources; gently overflow  
From blissful transport some—from clefts  
of woe

Some with ungovernable impulse rush;  
And some, coëval with the earliest blush  
Of infant passion, scarcely dare to show  
Their pearly lustre—coming but to go;  
And some break forth when others' sorrows  
crush

The sympathising heart. Nor these, nor  
yet

The noblest drops to admiration known,  
To gratitude, to injuries forgiven—  
Claim Heaven's regard like waters that  
have wet

The innocent eyes of youthful Monarchs  
driven

To pen the mandates, nature doth disown.

## XXXIII

REVIVAL OF POKERY

THE saintly Youth has ceased to rule, dis-  
crowned

By unrelenting Death. O People keen  
For change, to whom the new looks always  
green!

Rejoicing did they cast upon the ground  
Their Gods of wood and stone; and, at the  
sound

Of counter-proclamation, now are seen,  
(Proud triumph is it for a sullen Queen!)

Lifting them up, the worship to confound  
Of the Most High. Again do they invoke  
The Creature, to the Creature glory give;  
Again with frankincense the altars smoke  
Like those the Heathen served; and mass  
is sung;

And prayer, man's rational prerogative,  
Runs through blind channels of an unknown  
tongue.

## XXXIV

LATIMER AND RIDLEY

How fast the Marian death-list is unrolled!  
See Latimer and Ridley in the might  
Of Faith stand coupled for a common fight!  
One (like those prophets whom God sent  
of old)

Transfigured,<sup>1</sup> from this kindling hath fore-  
told

A torch of inextinguishable light;  
The Other gains a confidence as bold;  
And thus they foil their enemy's despite.  
The penal instruments, the shows of crime,  
Are glorified while this once-mitred pair  
Of saintly Friends the "murderer's chain  
partake,

Corded, and burning at the social stake:"  
Earth never witnessed object more sublime  
In constancy, in fellowship more fair!

## XXXV

CRANMER

OUTSTRETCHING flameward his upbraided  
hand

(O God of mercy, may no earthly Seat  
Of judgment such presumptuous doom re-  
peat!)

Amid the shuddering throng doth Cranmer  
stand;

Firm as the stake to which with iron band  
His frame is tied; firm from the naked  
feet

To the bare head. The victory is complete;  
The shrouded Body to the Soul's command  
Answers with more than Indian fortitude,  
Through all her nerves with finer sense  
endued,

Till breath departs in blissful aspiration:

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Then, 'mid the ghastly ruins of the fire,  
Behold the unalterable heart entire,  
Emblem of faith untouched, miraculous  
attestation !<sup>1</sup>

XXXVI

GENERAL VIEW OF THE TROUBLES OF  
THE REFORMATION

AID, glorious Martyrs, from your fields of  
light,  
Our mortal ken ! Inspire a perfect trust  
(While we look round) that Heaven's de-  
crees are just :  
Which few can hold committed to a fight  
That shows, ev'n on its better side, the might  
Of proud Self-will, Rapacity, and Lust,  
'Mid clouds enveloped of polemic dust,  
Which showers of blood seem rather to  
incite  
Than to allay. Anathemas are hurled  
From both sides ; veteran thunders (the  
brute test  
Of truth) are met by fulminations new—  
Tartarean flags are caught at, and unfurled—  
Friends strike at friends—the flying shall  
pursue—  
And Victory sickens, ignorant where to  
rest !

XXXVII

ENGLISH REFORMERS IN EXILE

SCATTERING, like birds escaped the fowler's  
net,  
Some seek with timely flight a foreign  
strand ;  
Most happy, re-assembled in a land  
By dauntless Luther freed, could they forget  
Their Country's woes. But scarcely have  
they met,  
Partners in faith, and brothers in distress,  
Free to pour forth their common thank-  
fulness,  
Ere hope declines :—their union is beset  
With speculative notions rashly sown,  
Whence thickly-sprouting growth of poison-  
ous weeds ;  
Their forms are broken staves ; their pas-  
sions, steeds

<sup>1</sup> For the belief in this fact, see the contem-  
porary Historians.

That master them. How enviably blest  
Is he who can, by help of grace, enthrone  
The peace of God within his single breast !

XXXVIII

ELIZABETH

HAIL, Virgin Queen ! o'er many an envious  
bar  
Triumphant, snatched from many a  
treacherous wife !  
All hail, sage Lady, whom a grateful Isle  
Hath blest, respiring from that dismal war  
Stilled by thy voice ! But quickly from  
afar  
Defiance breathes with more malignant  
aim ;  
And alien storms with home-bred ferments  
claim  
Portentous fellowship. Her silver car,  
By sleepless prudence ruled, glides slowly  
on ;  
Unhurt by violence, from menaced taint  
Emerging pure, and seemingly more bright :  
Ah ! wherefore yields it to a foul constraint  
Black as the clouds its beams dispersed,  
while shone,  
By men and angels blest, the glorious light ?

XXXIX

EMINENT REFORMERS

METHINKS that I could trip o'er heaviest  
soil,  
Light as a buoyant bark from wave to wave,  
Were mine the trusty staff that JEWEL  
gave  
To youthful HOOKER, in familiar style  
The gift exalting, and with playful smile :<sup>2</sup>  
For thus equipped, and bearing on his head  
The Donor's farewell blessing, can he dread  
Tempest, or length of way, or weight of  
toil ?—  
More sweet than odours caught by him  
who sails  
Near spicy shores of Araby the blest,  
A thousand times more exquisitely sweet,  
The freight of holy feeling which we meet,  
In thoughtful moments, wafted by the gales  
From fields where good men walk, or  
bowers wherein they rest.

<sup>2</sup> See Note.



## XL

## THE SAME

HOLY and heavenly Spirits as they are,  
 Spotless in life, and eloquent as wise,  
 With what entire affection do they prize  
 Their Church reformed! labouring with  
 earnest care  
 To baffle all that may her strength impair;  
 That Church, the unperverted Gospel's  
 seat;  
 In their afflictions a divine retreat;  
 Source of their liveliest hope, and tenderest  
 prayer!—  
 The truth exploring with an equal mind,  
 In doctrine and communion they have  
 sought  
 Firmly between the two extremes to steer;  
 But theirs the wise man's ordinary lot—  
 To trace right courses for the stubborn  
 blind,  
 And prophesy to ears that will not hear.

## XLI

## DISTRACTIONS

MEN, who have ceased to reverence, soon  
 defy,  
 Their forefathers; lo! sects are formed,  
 and split  
 With morbid restlessness;—the ecstatic fit  
 Spreads wide; though special mysteries  
 multiply,  
*The Saints must govern*, is their common cry;  
 And so they labour, deeming Holy Writ  
 Disgraced by aught that seems content to sit  
 Beneath the roof of settled Modesty.  
 The Romanist exults; fresh hope he draws  
 From the confusion, craftily incites  
 The overweening, personates the mad—<sup>1</sup>  
 To heap disgust upon the worthier Cause:  
 Totters the Throne; the new-born Church  
 is sad,  
 For every wave against her peace unites.

## XLII

## GUNPOWDER PLOT

FEAR hath a hundred eyes that all agree  
 To plague her beating heart; and there is  
 one

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

(Nor idlest that!) which holds communion  
 With things that were not, yet were *meant*  
 to be.

Aghast within its gloomy cavity  
 That eye (which sees as if fulfilled and done  
 Crimes that might stop the motion of the  
 sun)

Beholds the horrible catastrophe  
 Of an assembled Senate unredeemed  
 From subterraneous Treason's darkling  
 power:

Merciless act of sorrow infinite!  
 Worse than the product of that dismal  
 night,

When gushing, copious as a thunder-  
 shower,  
 The blood of Huguenots through Paris  
 streamed.

## XLIII

## ILLUSTRATION

THE JUNG-FRAU AND THE FALL OF THE  
RHINE NEAR SCHAFFHAUSEN

THE Virgin Mountain,<sup>2</sup> wearing like a  
 Queen  
 A brilliant crown of everlasting snow,  
 Sheds ruin from her sides; and men below  
 Wonder that aught of aspect so serene  
 Can link with desolation. Smooth and  
 green,  
 And seeming, at a little distance, slow,  
 The waters of the Rhine; but on they go  
 Fretting and whitening, keener and more  
 keen;  
 Till madness seizes on the whole wide Flood,  
 Turned to a fearful Thing whose nostrils  
 breathe  
 Blasts of tempestuous smoke—wherewith  
 he tries  
 To hide himself, but only magnifies;  
 And doth in more conspicuous torment  
 writhe,  
 Deafening the region in his ireful mood.

## XLIV

## TROUBLES OF CHARLES THE FIRST

EVEN such the contrast that, where'er we  
 move,

<sup>2</sup> The Jung-frau.

To the mind's eye Religion doth present ;  
Now with her own deep quietness content ;  
Then, like the mountain, thundering from  
above

Against the ancient pine-trees of the grove  
And the Land's humblest comforts. Now  
her mood

Recalls the transformation of the flood,  
Whose rage the gentle skies in vain reprove ;  
Earth cannot check. O terrible excess  
Of headstrong will ! Can this be Piety ?

No—some fierce Maniac hath usurped her  
name ;

And scourges England struggling to be  
free :

Her peace destroyed ! her hopes a wilder-  
ness !

Her blessings cursed—her glory turned to  
shame !

## XLV

LAUD<sup>1</sup>

PREJUDGED by foes determined not to spare,  
An old weak Man for vengeance thrown  
aside,

Laud, "in the painful art of dying" tried,  
(Like a poor bird entangled in a snare  
Whose heart still flutters, though his wings  
forbear

To stir in useless struggle) hath relied  
On hope that conscious innocence supplied,  
And in his prison breathes celestial air.

Why tarries then thy chariot ? Wherefore  
stay,

O Death ! the ensanguined yet triumphant  
wheels,

Which thou prepar'st, full often, to convey  
(What time a State with maddening faction  
reels)

The Saint or Patriot to the world that heals  
All wounds, all perturbations doth allay ?

## XLVI

## AFFLICTIONS OF ENGLAND

HARP ! could'st thou venture, on thy boldest  
string,

The faintest note to echo which the blast  
Caught from the hand of Moses as it passed

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

O'er Sinai's top, or from the Shepherd-king,  
Early awake, by Siloa's brook, to sing  
Of dread Jehovah ; then, should wood and  
waste

Hear also of that name, and mercy cast  
Off to the mountains, like a covering  
Of which the Lord was weary. Weep, oh !  
weep,

Weep with the good, beholding King and  
Priest

Despised by that stern God to whom they  
raise

Their suppliant hands ; but holy is the  
feast

He keepeth ; like the firmament his ways :  
His statutes like the chambers of the deep.

## PART III

FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE PRESENT  
TIMES

When I came to this part of the series I had  
the dream described in this Sonnet. The figure  
was that of my daughter, and the whole passed  
exactly as here represented. The Sonnet was  
composed on the middle road leading from Gras-  
mere to Ambleside : it was begun as I left the  
last house of the vale, and finished, word for word  
as it now stands, before I came in view of Rydal.  
I wish I could say the same of the five or six  
hundred I have written : most of them were fre-  
quently retouched in the course of composition,  
and, not a few, laboriously.

I have only further to observe that the intended  
Church which prompted these Sonnets was erected  
on Coleorton Moor towards the centre of a very  
populous parish between three and four miles  
from Ashby-de-la-Zouch, on the road to Lough-  
borough, and has proved, I believe, a great benefit  
to the neighbourhood.

## I

I SAW the figure of a lovely Maid  
Seated alone beneath a darksome tree,  
Whose fondly-overhanging canopy  
Set off her brightness with a pleasing shade.  
No Spirit was she ; *that* my heart betrayed,  
For she was one I loved exceedingly ;  
But while I gazed in tender reverie  
(Or was it sleep that with my Fancy played ?)  
The bright corporeal presence—form and  
face—

Remaining still distinct grew thin and rare,  
Like sunny mist ;—at length the golden  
hair,  
Shape, limbs, and heavenly features, keep-  
ing pace  
Each with the other in a lingering race  
Of dissolution, melted into air.

## II

## PATRIOTIC SYMPATHIES

LAST night, without a voice, that Vision  
spake  
Fear to my Soul, and sadness which might  
seem  
Wholly dissevered from our present theme ;  
Yet, my beloved Country ! I partake  
Of kindred agitations for thy sake ;  
Thou, too, dost visit oft my midnight  
dream ;  
Thy glory meets me with the earliest beam  
Of light, which tells that Morning is awake.  
If aught impair thy beauty or destroy,  
Or but forebode destruction, I deplore  
With filial love the sad vicissitude ;  
If thou hast fallen, and righteous Heaven  
restore  
The prostrate, then my spring-time is  
renewed,  
And sorrow bartered for exceeding joy.

## III

## CHARLES THE SECOND

WHO comes—with rapture greeted, and  
caressed  
With frantic love—his kingdom to regain ?  
Him Virtue's Nurse, Adversity, in vain  
Received, and fostered in her iron breast :  
For all she taught of hardest and of best,  
Or would have taught, by discipline of pain  
And long privation, now dissolves amain,  
Or is remembered only to give zest  
To wantonness.—Away, Circæan revels !  
But for what gain ? if England soon must  
sink  
Into a gulf which all distinction levels—  
That bigotry may swallow the good name,  
And, with that draught, the life-blood :  
misery, shame,  
By Poets loathed ; from which Historians  
shrink !

## IV

## LATITUDINARIANISM

YET Truth is keenly sought for, and the  
wind  
Charged with rich words poured out in  
thought's defence ;  
Whether the Church inspire that eloquence,  
Or a Platonic Piety confined  
To the sole temple of the inward mind ;  
And One there is who builds immortal lays,  
Though doomed to tread in solitary ways,  
Darkness before and danger's voice behind ;  
Yet not alone, nor helpless to repel  
Sad thoughts ; for from above the starry  
sphere  
Come secrets, whispered nightly to his ear ;  
And the pure spirit of celestial light  
Shines through his soul—"that he may see  
and tell  
Of things invisible to mortal sight."

## V

## WALTON'S BOOK OF LIVES

THERE are no colours in the fairest sky  
So fair as these. The feather, whence the  
pen  
Was shaped that traced the lives of these  
good men,  
Dropped from an Angel's wing. With  
moistened eye  
We read of faith and purest charity  
In Statesman, Priest, and humble Citizen :  
Oh could we copy their mild virtues, then  
What joy to live, what blessedness to die !  
Methinks their very names shine still and  
bright ;  
Apart—like glow-worms on a summer  
night ;  
Or lonely tapers when from far they fling  
A guiding ray ; or seen—like stars on high,  
Satellites burning in a lucid ring  
Around meek Walton's heavenly memory.

## VI

## CLERICAL INTEGRITY

NOR shall the eternal roll of praise reject  
Those Unconforming ; whom one rigorous  
day

Drives from their Cures, a voluntary prey  
To poverty, and grief, and disrespect.  
And some to want—as if by tempests  
wrecked

On a wild coast how destitute! did They  
Feel not that Conscience never can betray,  
That peace of mind is Virtue's sure effect.  
Their altars they forego, their homes they  
quit,

Fields which they love, and paths they  
daily trod,

And cast the future upon Providence;  
As men the dictate of whose inward sense  
Outweighs the world; whom self-deceiving  
wit

Lures not from what they deem the cause  
of God.

## VII

PERSECUTION OF THE SCOTTISH  
COVENANTERS

WHEN Alpine Vales threw forth a suppliant  
cry,

The Majesty of England interposed  
And the sword stopped; the bleeding  
wounds were closed;

And Faith preserved her ancient purity.  
How little boots that precedent of good,  
Scorned or forgotten, Thou canst testify,  
For England's shame, O Sister Realm!  
from wood,

Mountain, and moor, and crowded street,  
where lie

The headless martyrs of the Covenant,  
Slain by Compatriot-protestants that draw  
From councils senseless as intolerant  
Their warrant. Bodies fall by wild sword-  
law;

But who would force the Soul, tilts with a  
straw

Against a Champion cased in adamant.

## VIII

## ACQUITTAL OF THE BISHOPS

A VOICE, from long-expecting thousands  
sent,

Shatters the air, and troubles tower and  
spire;

For Justice hath absolved the innocent,

And Tyranny is balked of her desire:  
Up, down, the busy Thames—rapid as  
fire

Coursing a train of gunpowder—it went,  
And transport finds in every street a vent,  
Till the whole City rings like one vast  
quire.

The Fathers urge the People to be still,  
With outstretched hands and earnest speech  
—in vain!

Yea, many, haply wont to entertain  
Small reverence for the mitre's offices,  
And to Religion's self no friendly will,  
A Prelate's blessing ask on bended knees.

## IX

## WILLIAM THE THIRD

CALM as an under-current, strong to draw  
Millions of waves into itself, and run,  
From sea to sea, impervious to the sun  
And ploughing storm, the spirit of Nassau  
Swerves not, (how blest if by religious awe  
Swayed, and thereby enabled to contend  
With the wide world's commotions) from  
its end

Swerves not—diverted by a casual law.  
Had mortal action e'er a nobler scope?  
The Hero comes to liberate, not defy;  
And, while he marches on with steadfast  
hope,

Conqueror beloved! expected anxiously!  
The vacillating Bondman of the Pope  
Shrinks from the verdict of his steadfast  
eye.

## X

OBLIGATIONS OF CIVIL TO RELIGIOUS  
LIBERTY

UNGRATEFUL Country, if thou e'er forget  
The sons who for thy civil rights have bled!  
How, like a Roman, Sidney bowed his  
head,

And Russel's milder blood the scaffold wet;  
But these had fallen for profitless regret  
Had not thy holy Church her champions  
bred,

And claims from other worlds inspirited  
The star of Liberty to rise. Nor yet  
(Grave this within thy heart!) if spiritual  
things

Be lost, through apathy, or scorn, or fear,  
 Shalt thou thy humbler franchises support,  
 However hardly won or justly dear:  
 What came from heaven to heaven by  
 nature clings,  
 And, if dissevered thence, its course is  
 short.

## XI

## SACHEVEREL

A SUDDEN conflict rises from the swell  
 Of a proud slavery met by tenets strained  
 In Liberty's behalf. Fears, true or feigned,  
 Spread through all ranks; and lo! the  
 Sentinel  
 Who loudest rang his pulpit 'larum bell,  
 Stands at the Bar, absolved by female  
 eyes  
 Mingling their glances with grave flatteries  
 Lavished on *Him*—that England may rebel  
 Against her ancient virtue. HIGH and  
 LOW,  
 Watchwords of Party, on all tongues are  
 rife;  
 As if a Church, though sprung from heaven,  
 must owe  
 To opposites and fierce extremes her life,—  
 Not to the golden mean, and quiet flow  
 Of truths that soften hatred, temper strife.

## XII

DOWN a swift Stream, thus far, a bold  
 design  
 Have we pursued, with livelier stir of heart  
 Than his who sees, borne forward by the  
 Rhine,  
 The living landscapes greet him, and  
 depart;  
 Sees spires fast sinking—up again to start!  
 And strives the towers to number, that  
 recline  
 O'er the dark steepes, or on the horizon  
 line  
 Striding with shattered crests his eye  
 athwart,  
 So have we hurried on with troubled plea-  
 sure:  
 Henceforth, as on the bosom of a stream  
 That slackens, and spreads wide a watery  
 gleam,

We, nothing loth a lingering course to  
 measure,  
 May gather up our thoughts, and mark at  
 leisure  
 How widely spread the interests of our  
 theme.

## XIII

ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY IN  
AMERICAI. THE PILGRIM FATHERS<sup>1</sup>

WELL worthy to be magnified are they  
 Who, with sad hearts, of friends and  
 country took  
 A last farewell, their loved abodes forsook,  
 And hallowed ground in which their fathers  
 lay;  
 Then to the new-found World explored  
 their way,  
 That so a Church, unforced, uncalled to  
 brook  
 Ritual restraints, within some sheltering  
 nook  
 Her Lord might worship and his word obey  
 In freedom. Men they were who could not  
 bend;  
 Blest Pilgrims, surely, as they took for  
 guide  
 A will by sovereign Conscience sanctified;  
 Blest while their Spirits from the woods  
 ascend  
 Along a Galaxy that knows no end,  
 But in His glory who for Sinners died.

## XIV

## II. CONTINUED

FROM Rite and Ordinance abused they fled  
 To Wilds where both were utterly unknown;  
 But not to them had Providence foreshown  
 What benefits are missed, what evils bred,  
 In worship neither raised nor limited  
 Save by Self-will. Lo! from that distant  
 shore,  
 For Rite and Ordinance, Piety is led  
 Back to the Land those Pilgrims left of  
 yore,  
 Led by her own free choice. So Truth  
 and Love  
 By Conscience governed do their steps  
 retrace.—

<sup>1</sup> This and the two following were added in  
 1842. See Note.

Fathers ! your Virtues, such the power of  
 grace,  
 Their spirit, in your Children, thus approve.  
 Transcendent over time, unbound by place,  
 Concord and Charity in circles move.

## XV

III. CONCLUDED.—AMERICAN  
 EPISCOPACY

PATRIOTS informed with Apostolic light  
 Were they, who, when their Country had  
 been freed,  
 Bowing with reverence to the ancient creed,  
 Fixed on the frame of England's Church  
 their sight,  
 And strove in filial love to reunite  
 What force had severed. Thence they  
 fetched the seed  
 Of Christian unity, and won a meed  
 Of praise from Heaven. To Thee, O  
 saintly WHITE,  
 Patriarch of a wide-spreading family,  
 Remotest lands and unborn times shall  
 turn,  
 Whether they would restore or build—to  
 Thee,  
 As one who rightly taught how zeal should  
 burn,  
 As one who drew from out Faith's holiest  
 urn  
 The purest stream of patient Energy.

## XVI

BISHOPS and Priests, blessed are ye, if  
 deep  
 (As yours above all offices is high)  
 Deep in your hearts the sense of duty lie ;  
 Charged as ye are by Christ to feed and  
 keep  
 From wolves your portion of his chosen  
 sheep :  
 Labouring as ever in your Master's sight,  
 Making your hardest task your best delight,  
 What perfect glory ye in Heaven shall  
 reap !—  
 But, in the solemn Office which ye sought  
 And undertook premonished, if unsound  
 Your practice prove, faithless though but  
 in thought,

Bishops and Priests, think what a gulf  
 profound  
 Awaits you then, if they were rightly taught  
 Who framed the Ordinance by your lives  
 disowned !

## XVII

## PLACES OF WORSHIP

As star that shines dependent upon star  
 Is to the sky while we look up and love ;  
 As to the deep fair ships which though they  
 move  
 Seem fixed, to eyes that watch them from  
 afar ;  
 As to the sandy desert fountains are,  
 With palm-groves shaded at wide intervals,  
 Whose fruit around the sun-burnt Native  
 falls  
 Of roving tired or desultory war—  
 Such to this British Isle her christian Fanes,  
 Each linked to each for kindred services ;  
 Her Spires, her Steeple-towers with glitter-  
 ing vanes  
 Far-kenned, her Chapels lurking among  
 trees,  
 Where a few villagers on bended knees  
 Find solace which a busy world disdains.

## XVIII

## PASTORAL CHARACTER

A GENIAL hearth, a hospitable board,  
 And a refined rusticity, belong  
 To the neat mansion,<sup>1</sup> where, his flock  
 among,  
 The learned Pastor dwells, their watchful  
 Lord.  
 Though meek and patient as a sheathed  
 sword ;  
 Though pride's least lurking thought ap-  
 pear a wrong  
 To human kind ; though peace be on his  
 tongue,  
 Gentleness in his heart—can earth afford  
 Such genuine state, pre-eminence so free,  
 As when, arrayed in Christ's authority,  
 He from the pulpit lifts his awful hand ;  
 Conjures, implores, and labours all he can  
 For re-subjecting to divine command  
 The stubborn spirit of rebellious man ?

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XIX

## THE LITURGY

YES, if the intensities of hope and fear  
 Attract us still, and passionate exercise  
 Of lofty thoughts, the way before us lies  
 Distinct with signs, through which in set  
 career,

As through a zodiac, moves the ritual year  
 Of England's Church; stupendous mys-  
 teries!

Which whoso travels in her bosom eyes,  
 As he approaches them, with solemn cheer.  
 Upon that circle traced from sacred story  
 We only dare to cast a transient glance,  
 Trusting in hope that Others may advance  
 With mind intent upon the King of Glory,  
 From his mild advent till his countenance  
 Shall dissipate the seas and mountains  
 hoary.

## XX

## BAPTISM

DEAR be the Church, that, watching o'er  
 the needs

Of Infancy, provides a timely shower  
 Whose virtue changes to a christian Flower  
 A Growth from sinful Nature's bed of  
 weeds!—

Fitliest beneath the sacred roof proceeds  
 The ministration; while parental Love  
 Looks on, and Grace descendeth from  
 above

As the high service pledges now, now  
 pleads.

There, should vain thoughts outspread  
 their wings and fly

To meet the coming hours of festal mirth,  
 The tombs—which hear and answer that  
 brief cry,

The Infant's notice of his second birth—  
 Recall the wandering Soul to sympathy  
 With what man hopes from Heaven, yet  
 fears from Earth.

## XXI

## SPONSORS

FATHER!—to God himself we cannot give  
 A holier name! then lightly do not bear

Both names conjoined, but of thy spiritual  
 care

Be duly mindful: still more sensitive  
 Do Thou, in truth a second Mother, strive  
 Against disheartening custom, that by Thee  
 Watched, and with love and pious industry  
 Tended at need, the adopted Plant may  
 thrive

For everlasting bloom. Benign and pure  
 This Ordinance, whether, loss it would  
 supply,

Prevent omission, help deficiency,  
 Or seek to make assurance doubly sure.  
 Shame if the consecrated Vow be found  
 An idle form, the Word an empty sound!

## XXII

## CATECHISING

FROM Little down to Least, in due degree,  
 Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought  
 vest,

Each with a vernal posy at his breast,  
 We stood, a trembling, earnest Company!  
 With low soft murmur, like a distant bee,  
 Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears  
 betrayed;

And some a bold unerring answer made:  
 How fluttered then thy anxious heart for  
 me,

Belovèd Mother! Thou whose happy hand  
 Had bound the flowers I wore, with faithful  
 tie:

Sweet flowers! at whose inaudible command  
 Her countenance, phantom-like, doth re-  
 appear:

O lost too early for the frequent tear,  
 And ill requited by this heartfelt sigh!

## XXIII

## CONFIRMATION

THE Young-ones gathered in from hill and  
 dale,

With holiday delight on every brow:  
 'Tis passed away; far other thoughts pre-  
 vail;

For they are taking the baptismal Vow  
 Upon their conscious selves; their own lips  
 speak

The solemn promise. Strongest sinews fail.

And many a blooming, many a lovely, cheek  
Under the holy fear of God turns pale;  
While on each head his lawn-robed Servant  
lays  
An apostolic hand, and with prayer seals  
The Covenant. The Omnipotent will raise  
Their feeble Souls; and bear with *his*  
regrets,  
Who, looking round the fair assemblage,  
feels  
That ere the Sun goes down their childhood  
sets.

## XXIV

## CONFIRMATION CONTINUED

I SAW a Mother's eye intensely bent  
Upon a Maiden trembling as she knelt;  
In and for whom the pious Mother felt  
Things that we judge of by a light too  
faint:  
Tell, if ye may, some star-crowned Muse,  
or Saint!  
Tell what rushed in, from what she was  
relieved—  
Then, when her Child the hallowing touch  
received,  
And such vibration through the Mother  
went  
That tears burst forth amain. Did gleams  
appear?  
Opened a vision of that blissful place  
Where dwells a Sister-child? And was  
power given  
Part of her lost One's glory back to trace  
Even to this Rite? For thus *She* knelt,  
and, ere  
The summer-leaf had faded, passed to  
Heaven.

## XXV

## SACRAMENT

By chain yet stronger must the Soul be  
tied:  
One duty more, last stage of this ascent,  
Brings to thy food, mysterious Sacrament!  
The Offspring, haply, at the Parent's side;  
But not till They, with all that do abide  
In Heaven, have lifted up their hearts to  
laud  
And magnify the glorious name of God,

Fountain of grace, whose Son for sinners  
died.  
Ye, who have duly weighed the summons,  
pause  
No longer; ye, whom to the saving rite  
The Altar calls, come early under laws  
That can secure for you a path of light  
Through gloomiest shade; put on (nor  
dread its weight)  
Armour divine, and conquer in your cause!

## XXVI

## THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

THE Vested Priest before the Altar stands;  
Approach, come gladly, ye prepared, in  
sight  
Of God and chosen friends, your troth to  
plight  
With the symbolic ring, and willing hands  
Solemnly joined. Now sanctify the bands  
O Father!—to the Espoused thy blessing  
give,  
That mutually assisted they may live  
Obedient, as here taught, to thy commands.  
So prays the Church, to consecrate a Vow  
"The which would endless matrimony  
make;"  
Union that shadows forth and doth partake  
A mystery potent human love to endow  
With heavenly, each more prized for the  
other's sake;  
Weep not, meek Bride! uplift thy timid  
brow.

## XXVII

## THANKSGIVING AFTER CHILDBIRTH

WOMAN! the Power who left his throne  
on high,  
And deigned to wear the robe of flesh we  
wear,  
The Power that thro' the straits of Infancy  
Did pass dependent on maternal care,  
His own humanity with Thee will share,  
Pleased with the thanks that in his People's  
eye  
Thou offerest up for safe Delivery  
From Childbirth's perilous throes. And  
should the Heir  
Of thy fond hopes hereafter walk inclined  
To courses fit to make a mother rue



That ever he was born, a glance of mind  
Cast upon this observance may renew  
A better will; and, in the imagined view  
Of thee thus kneeling, safety he may find.

## XXVIII

## VISITATION OF THE SICK

THE Sabbath bells renew the inviting peal;  
Glad music! yet there be that, worn with pain  
And sickness, listen where they long have lain,  
In sadness listen. With maternal zeal  
Inspired, the Church sends ministers to kneel  
Beside the afflicted; to sustain with prayer,  
And soothe the heart confession hath laid bare—  
That pardon, from God's throne, may set its seal  
On a true Penitent. When breath departs  
From one disburthened so, so comforted,  
His Spirit Angels greet; and ours be hope  
That, if the Sufferer rise from his sick-bed,  
Hence he will gain a firmer mind, to cope  
With a bad world, and foil the Tempter's arts.

## XXIX

## THE COMMINATION SERVICE

SHUN not this Rite, neglected, yea abhorred,  
By some of unreflecting mind, as calling  
Man to curse man, (thought monstrous and appalling.)  
Go thou and hear the threatenings of the LORD;  
Listening within his Temple see his sword  
Unsheathed in wrath to strike the offender's head,  
Thy own, if sorrow for thy sin be dead,  
Guilt unrepented, pardon unimplored.  
Two aspects bears Truth needful for salvation;  
Who knows not *that*?—yet would this delicate age  
Look only on the Gospel's brighter page:  
Let light and dark duly our thoughts employ;  
So shall the fearful words of Commination  
Yield timely fruit of peace and love and joy.

## XXX

## FORMS OF PRAYER AT SEA

To kneeling Worshipers no earthly floor  
Gives holier invitation than the deck  
Of a storm-shattered Vessel saved from Wreck  
(When all that Man could do availed no more)  
By him who raised the Tempest and restrains:  
Happy the crew who this have felt, and pour  
Forth for his mercy, as the Church ordains,  
Solemn thanksgiving. Nor will *they* implore  
In vain who, for a rightful cause, give breath  
To words the Church prescribes aiding the lip  
For the heart's sake, ere ship with hostile ship  
Encounters, armed for work of pain and death.  
Suppliants! the God to whom your cause ye trust  
Will listen, and ye know that He is just.

## XXXI

## FUNERAL SERVICE

FROM the Baptismal hour, thro' weal and woe,  
The Church extends her care to thought and deed;  
Nor quits the Body when the Soul is freed,  
The mortal weight cast off to be laid low.  
Blest Rite for him who hears in faith, "I know  
That my Redeemer liveth,"—hears each word  
That follows—striking on some kindred chord  
Deep in the thankful heart;—yet tears will flow.  
Man is as grass that springeth up at morn,  
Grows green, and is cut down and withereth  
Ere nightfall—truth that well may claim a sigh,  
Its natural echo; but hope comes reborn  
At Jesu's bidding. We rejoice, "O Death,  
Where is thy Sting?—O Grave, where is thy Victory?"

XXXIII

RURAL CEREMONY<sup>1</sup>

CLOSING the sacred Book which long has  
fed  
Our meditations, give we to a day  
Of annual joy one tributary lay ;  
This day, when, forth by rustic music led,  
The village Children, while the sky is red  
With evening lights, advance in long  
array  
Through the still churchyard, each with  
garland gay,  
That, carried sceptre-like, o'ertops the  
head  
Of the proud Bearer. To the wide church-  
door,  
Charged with these offerings which their  
fathers bore  
For decoration in the Papal time,  
The innocent procession softly moves :—  
The spirit of Laud is pleased in heaven's  
pure clime,  
And Hooker's voice the spectacle approves !

XXXIII

REGRETS

WOULD that our scrupulous Sires had dared  
to leave  
Less scanty measure of those graceful rites  
And usages, whose due return invites  
A stir of mind too natural to deceive ;  
Giving to Memory help when she would  
weave  
A crown for Hope !—I dread the boasted  
lights  
That all too often are but fiery blights,  
Killing the bud o'er which in vain we grieve.  
Go, seek, when Christmas snows discomfort  
bring,  
The counter Spirit found in some gay  
church  
Green with fresh holly, every pew a perch  
In which the linnets or the thrush might  
sing,  
Merry and loud and safe from prying  
search,  
Strains offered only to the genial Spring.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

XXXIV

MUTABILITY

FROM low to high doth dissolution climb,  
And sink from high to low, along a scale  
Of awful notes, whose concord shall not  
fail ;  
A musical but melancholy chime,  
Which they can hear who meddle not with  
crime,  
Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.  
Truth fails not ; but her outward forms that  
bear  
The longest date do melt like frosty rime,  
That in the morning whitened hill and plain  
And is no more ; drop like the tower sub-  
lime  
Of yesterday, which royally did wear  
His crown of weeds, but could not even  
sustain  
Some casual shout that broke the silent air,  
Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

XXXV

OLD ABBEYS

MONASTIC Domes ! following my down-  
ward way,  
Untouched by due regret I marked your  
fall !  
Now, ruin, beauty, ancient stillness, all  
Dispose to judgments temperate as we lay  
On our past selves in life's declining day :  
For as, by discipline of Time made wise,  
We learn to tolerate the infirmities  
And faults of others—gently as he may,  
So with our own the mild Instructor deals,  
Teaching us to forget them or forgive.<sup>1</sup>  
Perversely curious, then, for hidden ill  
Why should we break Time's charitable  
seals ?  
Once ye were holy, ye are holy still ;  
Your spirit freely let me drink, and live !

XXXVI

EMIGRANT FRENCH CLERGY

EVEN while I speak, the sacred roofs of  
France  
Are shattered into dust ; and self-exiled

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

From altars threatened, levelled, or defiled,  
Wander the Ministers of God, as chance  
Opens a way for life, or consonance  
Of faith invites. More welcome to no land  
The fugitives than to the British strand,  
Where priest and layman with the vigilance  
Of true compassion greet them. Creed and  
test

Vanish before the unreserved embrace  
Of catholic humanity:—distress  
They came,—and, while the moral tempest  
roars

Throughout the Country they have left, our  
shores

Give to their Faith a fearless resting-place.

## XXXVII

## CONGRATULATION

THUS all things lead to Charity secured  
By THEM who blessed the soft and happy  
gale

That landward urged the great Deliverer's  
sail,

Till in the sunny bay his fleet was moored !  
Propitious hour !—had we, like them, en-  
dured

Sore stress of apprehension,<sup>1</sup> with a mind  
Sickened by injuries, dreading worse  
designed,

From month to month trembling and  
unassured,

How had we then rejoiced ! But we have  
felt,

As a loved substance, their futurity :  
Good, which they dared not hope for, we  
have seen ;

A State whose generous will through earth  
is dealt ;

A State—which, balancing herself between  
Licence and slavish order, dares be free.

## XXXVIII

## NEW CHURCHES

BUT liberty, and triumphs on the Main,  
And laurelled armies, not to be withstood--  
What serve they ? if, on transitory good  
Intent, and sedulous of abject gain,  
The State (ah, surely not preserved in vain !)

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Forbear to shape due channels which the  
Flood

Of sacred truth may enter—till it brood  
O'er the wide realm, as o'er the Egyptian  
plain

The all-sustaining Nile. No more—the  
time

Is conscious of her want ; through England's  
bounds,

In rival haste, the wished-for Temples rise !  
I hear their sabbath bells' harmonious  
chime

Float on the breeze—the heavenliest of all  
sounds

That vale or hill prolongs or multiplies !

## XXXIX

## CHURCH TO BE ERECTED

BE this the chosen site ; the virgin sod,  
Moistened from age to age by dewy eve,  
Shall disappear, and grateful earth receive  
The corner-stone from hands that build to  
God.

Yon reverend hawthorns, hardened to the  
rod

Of winter storms, yet budding cheerfully ;  
Those forest oaks of Druid memory,  
Shall long survive, to shelter the Abode  
Of genuine Faith. Where, haply, 'mid  
this band

Of daisies, shepherds sate of yore and wove  
May-garlands, there let the holy altar stand  
For kneeling adoration ;—while—above,  
Broods, visibly portrayed, the mystic Dove,  
That shall protect from blasphemy the  
Land.

## XI.

## CONTINUED

MINE ear has rung, my spirit sunk sub-  
dued,

Sharing the strong emotion of the crowd,  
When each pale brow to dread hosannas  
bowed

While clouds of incense mounting veiled  
the rood,

That glimmered like a pine-tree dimly  
viewed

Through Alpine vapours. Such appalling  
rite

Our Church prepares not, trusting to the  
might  
Of simple truth with grace divine imbued;  
Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,  
Like men ashamed:<sup>1</sup> the Sun with his first  
smile  
Shall greet that symbol crowning the low  
Pile:  
And the fresh air of incense-breathing morn  
Shall wooingly embrace it; and green moss  
Creep round its arms through centuries un-  
born.

## XLI

## NEW CHURCHYARD

THE encircling ground, in native turf ar-  
rayed,  
Is now by solemn consecration given  
To social interests, and to favouring Heaven;  
And where the rugged colts their gambols  
played,  
And wild deer bounded through the forest  
glade,  
Unchecked as when by merry Outlaw driven,  
Shall hymns of praise resound at morn and  
even;  
And soon, full soon, the lonely Sexton's spade  
Shall wound the tender sod. Encincture  
small,  
But infinite its grasp of weal and woe!  
Hopes, fears, in never-ending ebb and flow;—  
The spousal trembling, and the "dust to  
dust,"  
The prayers, the contrite struggle, and the  
trust  
That to the Almighty Father looks through  
all.

## XLII

## CATHEDRALS, ETC.

OPEN your gates, ye everlasting Piles!  
Types of the spiritual Church which God  
hath reared;  
Not loth we quit the newly-hallowed sward  
And humble altar, 'mid your sumptuous  
aisles  
To kneel, or thrud your intricate defiles,  
Or down the nave to pace in motion slow;  
Watching, with upward eye, the tall tower  
grow

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

And mount, at every step, with living wiles  
Instinct—to rouse the heart and lead the  
will  
By a bright ladder to the world above.  
Open your gates, ye Monuments of love  
Divine! thou Lincoln, on thy sovereign  
hill!  
Thou, stately York! and Ye, whose splen-  
dours cheer  
Isis and Cam, to patient Science dear!

## XLIII

INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,  
CAMBRIDGE

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,  
With ill-matched aims the Architect who  
planned—  
Albeit labouring for a scanty band  
Of white robed Scholars only—this immense  
And glorious Work of fine intelligence!  
Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects  
the lore  
Of nicely-calculated less or more;  
So deemed the man who fashioned for the  
sense  
These lofty pillars, spread that branching  
roof  
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand  
cells,  
Where light and shade repose, where music  
dwells  
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to  
die;  
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth  
proof  
That they were born for immortality.

## XLIV

## THE SAME

WHAT awful perspective! while from our  
sight  
With gradual stealth the lateral windows  
hide  
Their Portraits, their stone-work glim-  
mers, dyed  
In the soft chequerings of a sleepy light.  
Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremit,  
Whoe'er ye be, that thus, yourselves unseen,  
Imbue your prison-bars with solemn sheen,

Shine on, until yefade with coming Night !—  
 But, from the arms of silence—list ! O list !  
 The music bursteth into second life ;  
 The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed  
 By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife ;  
 Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before the  
     eye  
 Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy !

## XLV

## CONTINUED

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home  
 Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours  
     of fear  
 Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge  
     here ;  
 Or through the aisles of Westminster to  
     roam :  
 Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing  
     foam  
 Melts, if it cross the threshold ; where the  
     wreath  
 Of awe-struck wisdom droops : or let my  
     path  
 Lead to that younger Pile, whose sky-like  
     dome  
 Hath typified by reach of daring art  
 Infinity's embrace ; whose guardian crest,  
 The silent Cross, among the stars shall  
     spread  
 As now, when She hath also seen her  
     breast  
 Filled with mementos, satiate with its part  
 Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

## XLVI

## EJACULATION

GLORY to God ! and to the Power who  
     came  
 In filial duty, clothed with love divine,  
 That made his human tabernacle shine  
 Like Ocean burning with purpureal flame ;  
 Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its  
     name  
 From roseate hues, far kenned at morn and  
     even  
 In hours of peace, or when the storm is  
     driven  
 Along the nether region's rugged frame !<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Earth prompts—Heaven urges ; let us seek  
     the light,  
 Studious of that pure intercourse begun  
 When first our infant brows their lustre  
     won ;  
 So, like the Mountain, may we grow more  
     bright  
 From unimpeded commerce with the Sun,  
 At the approach of all-involving night.

## XLVII

## CONCLUSION

WHY sleeps the future, as a snake enrolled,  
 Coil within coil, at noon-tide ? For the  
     WORD  
 Yields, if with unpretentious faith ex-  
     plored,  
 Power at whose touch the sluggard shall  
     unfold  
 His drowsy rings. Look forth !—that  
     Stream behold,  
 THAT STREAM upon whose bosom we have  
     passed  
 Floating at ease while nations have effaced  
 Nations, and Death has gathered to his fold  
 Long lines of mighty Kings—look forth,  
     my Soul !  
 (Nor in this vision be thou slow to trust)  
 The living Waters, less and less by guilt  
 Stained and polluted, brighten as they roll,  
 Till they have reached the eternal City—  
     built  
 For the perfected Spirit of the just !

## MEMORY

A PEN—to register ; a key—  
 That winds through secret wards  
 Are well assigned to Memory  
 By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given  
 A Pencil to her hand ;  
 That, softening objects, sometimes even  
 Outstrips the heart's demand ;

That smooths foregone distress, the lines  
 Of lingering care subdues,  
 Long-vanished happiness refines,  
 And clothes in brighter hues ;

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works  
Those Spectres to dilate  
That startle Conscience, as she lurks  
Within her lonely seat.

Oh! that our lives, which flee so fast,  
In purity were such,  
That not an image of the past  
Should fear that pencil's touch!

Retirement then might hourly look  
Upon a soothing scene,  
Age steal to his allotted nook  
Contented and serene;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,  
In frosty moonlight glistening;  
Or mountain rivers, where they creep  
Along a channel smooth and deep,  
To their own far-off murmurs listening.  
1823.

## TO THE LADY FLEMING

### ON SEEING THE FOUNDATION PREPARING FOR THE ERECTION OF RYDAL CHAPEL, WESTMORELAND

After thanking Lady Fleming in prose for the service she had done to her neighbourhood by erecting this Chapel, I have nothing to say beyond the expression of regret that the architect did not furnish an elevation better suited to the site in a narrow mountain-pass, and, what is of more consequence, better constructed in the interior for the purposes of worship. It has no chancel; the altar is unbecomingly confined; the pews are so narrow as to preclude the possibility of kneeling with comfort; there is no vestry; and what ought to have been first mentioned, the font, instead of standing at its proper place at the entrance, is thrust into the farther end of a pew. When these defects shall be pointed out to the munificent Patroness, they will, it is hoped, be corrected.

#### I

BLEST is this Isle—our native Land;  
Where battlement and moated gate  
Are objects only for the hand  
Of hoary Time to decorate;  
Where shady hamlet, town that breathes  
Its busy smoke in social wreaths,  
No rampart's stern defence require,  
Nought but the heaven-directed spire,  
And steeple tower (with pealing bells  
Far-heard)—our only citadels,

#### II

O Lady! from a noble line  
Of chieftains sprung, who stoutly bore  
The spear, yet gave to works divine  
A bounteous help in days of yore,  
(As records mouldering in the Dell  
Of Nightshade<sup>1</sup> haply yet may tell;)   
Thee kindred aspirations moved  
To build, within a vale beloved,  
For Him upon whose high behests  
All peace depends, all safety rests.

#### III

How fondly will the woods embrace  
This daughter of thy pious care,  
Lifting her front with modest grace  
To make a fair recess more fair;  
And to exalt the passing hour;  
Or soothe it with a healing power  
Drawn from the Sacrifice fulfilled,  
Before this rugged soil was tilled,  
Or human habitation rose  
To interrupt the deep repose!

#### IV

Well may the villagers rejoice!  
Nor heat, nor cold, nor weary ways,  
Will be a hindrance to the voice  
That would unite in prayer and praise;  
More duly shall wild wandering Youth  
Receive the curb of sacred truth,  
Shall tottering Age, bent earthward, hear  
The Promise, with uplifted ear;  
And all shall welcome the new ray  
Imparted to their sabbath-day.

#### V

Nor deem the Poet's hope misplaced,  
His fancy cheated—that can see  
A shade upon the future cast,  
Of time's pathetic sanctity;  
Can hear the monitory clock  
Sound o'er the lake with gentle shock  
At evening, when the ground beneath  
Is ruffled o'er with cells of death;  
Where happy generations lie,  
Here tutored for eternity.

<sup>1</sup> Bekangs Ghyll—or the dell of Nightshade—in which stands St. Mary's Abbey in Low Furness.

## VI

Lives there a man whose sole delights  
Are trivial pomp and city noise,  
Hardening a heart that loathes or slights  
What every natural heart enjoys?  
Who never caught a noon-tide dream  
From murmur of a running stream;  
Could strip, for aught the prospect yields  
To him, their verdure from the fields;  
And take the radiance from the clouds  
In which the sun his setting shrouds.

## VII

A soul so pitiably forlorn,  
If such do on this earth abide,  
May season apathy with scorn,  
May turn indifference to pride;  
And still be not unblest—compared  
With him who grovels, self-debarred  
From all that lies within the scope  
Of holy faith and christian hope;  
Or, shipwrecked, kindles on the coast  
False fires, that others may be lost.

## VIII

Alas! that such perverted zeal  
Should spread on Britain's favoured  
ground!  
That public order, private weal,  
Should e'er have felt or feared a wound  
From champions of the desperate law  
Which from their own blind hearts they  
draw;  
Who tempt their reason to deny  
God, whom their passions dare defy,  
And boast that they alone are free  
Who reach this dire extremity!

## IX

But turn we from these "bold bad" men;  
The way, mild Lady! that hath led  
Down to their "dark opprobrious den,"  
Is all too rough for Thee to tread.  
Softly as morning vapours glide  
Down Rydal-cove from Fairfield's side,  
Should move the tenor of *his* song  
Who means to charity no wrong;  
Whose offering gladly would accord  
With this day's work, in thought and word.

## X

Heaven prosper it! may peace, and love,  
And hope, and consolation, fall,  
Through its meek influence, from above,  
And penetrate the hearts of all;  
All who, around the hallowed Fane,  
Shall sojourn in this fair domain;  
Grateful to Thee, while service pure,  
And ancient ordinance, shall endure,  
For opportunity bestowed  
To kneel together, and adore their God!

1823.

## ON THE SAME OCCASION

Oh! gather whencesoe'er ye safely may  
The help which slackening Piety requires;  
Nor deem that he perforce must go astray  
Who treads upon the footmarks of his sires.

Our churches, invariably perhaps, stand east and west, but *why* is by few persons *exactly* known; nor, that the degree of deviation from *due* east often noticeable in the ancient ones was determined, in each particular case, by the point in the horizon, at which the sun rose upon the day of the saint to whom the church was dedicated. These observances of our ancestors, and the causes of them, are the subject of the following stanzas.

WHEN in the antique age of bow and spear  
And feudal rapine clothed with iron mail,  
Came ministers of peace, intent to rear  
The Mother Church in yon sequestered  
vale;

Then, to her Patron Saint a previous rite  
Resounded with deep swell and solemn  
close,  
Through unremitting vigils of the night,  
Till from his couch the wished-for Sun up-  
rose.

He rose, and straight—as by divine com-  
mand,  
They, who had waited for that sign to trace  
Their work's foundation, gave with careful  
hand  
To the high altar its determined place;

Mindful of Him who in the Orient born  
There lived, and on the cross his life re-  
signed,

And who, from out the regions of the  
morn,  
Issuing in pomp, shall come to judge man-  
kind.

So taught *their* creed;—nor failed the  
eastern sky,  
'Mid these more awful feelings, to infuse  
The sweet and natural hopes that shall not  
die,  
Long as the sun his gladsome course re-  
news.

For us hath such prelude vigil ceased;  
Yet still we plant, like men of elder days,  
Our christian altar faithful to the east,  
Whence the tall window drinks the morn-  
ing rays;

That obvious emblem giving to the eye  
Of meek devotion, which erewhile it gave,  
That symbol of the dayspring from on  
high,  
Triumphant o'er the darkness of the grave.  
1823.

### "A VOLANT TRIBE OF BARDS ON EARTH ARE FOUND"

A VOLANT Tribe of Bards on earth are  
found,

Who, while the flattering Zephyrs round  
them play,

On "coignes of vantage" hang their nests  
of clay;

How quickly from that airy hold unbound,  
Dust for oblivion! To the solid ground  
Of nature trusts the Mind that builds for  
aye;

Convinced that there, there only, she can lay  
Secure foundations. As the year runs  
round,

Apart she toils within the chosen ring;  
While the stars shine, or while day's purple  
eye

Is gently closing with the flowers of spring;  
Where even the motion of an Angel's  
wing

Would interrupt the intense tranquillity  
Of silent hills, and more than silent sky.  
1823.

### "NOT LOVE, NOT WAR, NOR THE TUMULTUOUS SWELL"

NOT Love, not War, nor the tumultuous  
swell,

Of civil conflict, nor the wrecks of change,  
Nor Duty struggling with afflictions  
strange—

Not these *alone* inspire the tuneful shell;  
But where untroubled peace and concord  
dwell,

There also is the Muse not loth to range,  
Watching the twilight smoke of cot or  
grange,

Skyward ascending from a woody dell.  
Meek aspirations please her, lone endeavour,  
And sage content, and placid melancholy;  
She loves to gaze upon a crystal river—  
Diaphanous because it travels slowly;  
Soft is the music that would charm for ever;  
The flower of sweetest smell is shy and  
lowly. 1823.

### TO —

Written at Rydal Mount. On Mrs. Words-  
worth.

LET other bards of angels sing,

Bright suns without a spot;  
But thou art no such perfect thing:  
Rejoice that thou art not!

Heed not tho' none should call thee fair;

So, Mary, let it be  
If nought in loveliness compare  
With what thou art to me.

True beauty dwells in deep retreats,  
Whose veil is unremoved  
Till heart with heart in concord beats,  
And the lover is beloved. 1824.

### TO —

Written at Rydal Mount. To Mrs. W.

O DEARER far than light and life are dear,  
Full oft our human foresight I deplore;  
Trembling, through my unworthiness, with  
fear

That friends, by death disjoined, may meet  
no more!



1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

2. Once the problem is identified, the next step is to define the objectives and goals of the project. This helps to clarify what needs to be achieved and provides a clear direction for the team.

3. The third step is to develop a plan or strategy to address the problem. This involves breaking down the problem into smaller, manageable tasks and determining the resources needed to complete each task.

4. The fourth step is to implement the plan. This involves putting the strategy into action and monitoring progress regularly to ensure that the project is on track.

5. Finally, the fifth step is to evaluate the results of the project. This involves assessing the outcomes against the objectives and goals to determine the effectiveness of the project and identify areas for improvement.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY  
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1. I am not making any money  
 2. I am not making any money  
 3. I am not making any money  
 4. I am not making any money

But turn we from these "bold bad" men  
The way mild Lady! that hath led  
Down to their "dark opprobrious den,  
Is all too rough for Thee to tread,  
Softly as morning vapours glide  
Down Rydal-cove from Fairfield's side  
Should move the tenor of his song  
Who means to charity no wrong  
Whose offering gladly would accept  
With this day's work, in thought

[illegible]

He stated that he had not been in contact with the subject since the subject's departure from the country. He stated that he had not been in contact with the subject since the subject's departure from the country. He stated that he had not been in contact with the subject since the subject's departure from the country.

The churches, however, perhaps, stand on an even keel, but help is by few persons easily given. Not that the degree of devotion has increased when unreasonable in the ancient case or otherwise, in each particular case, by the pit in the furnace, or which the sun was upon to say of the altar to which the church was dedicated. These circumstances of our situation, and the causes of them, are the subject of the following remarks.

THIS is the antique age of how and you  
and feudal empire clothed with feudal,  
some ministers of peace, intent to the  
The Mother Church in you significant

Then, to her Patron Saint a previous rite  
 Resounded with deep swell and solemn  
 close,  
 Unremitting vigils of the night,  
 On his couch the wished-for Sun up-  
 rose.

...and straight—as by divine command,  
...who had waited for that sign to  
...work's foundation, gave

and who, from his own heart  
singing in prayer, and  
kind.

o taught their soul — the last  
Mid these many, many years  
be sweet and true, and  
de.  
long as the sun is shining  
new.

For us hath such blessing  
Yet still we plant the seed  
Our christian after  
Whence the tall, slender  
ing trees.

That obvious, common  
Of meek devotion, what  
That symbol of the  
high.  
Triumphs of the

## "A VOLANT TRIBE OF MEN EARTH ARE FREE"

VOLANT Tribe of Men  
found,  
who, while the flowing  
them play.

On "coignes of sunny  
of clay;

How quickly from the  
Dust for oblivion!  
Of nature trusts the  
aye;

Convinced that there  
Secure foundations  
round.

Apart she holds within the  
While the stars shine  
eye.

Is gently dimmer  
Where

with your favourite

MEDITATION<sup>1</sup> flows;  
fierce Britons, pleased to

ace the expression of repose;  
ere some pious hermit chose  
die, the peace of heaven his aim;  
the wild sequestered region owes  
late day, its sanctifying name.

S CAFAILLGARROCH, in the Cambrian  
tongue,  
in ours, the VALE OF FRIENDSHIP, let *this*  
spot  
Be named; where, faithful to a low-roofed  
Cot,  
On Deva's banks, ye have abode so long;

<sup>1</sup> Glyn Myrr.

Misgivings, hard to vanquish or control,  
Mix with the day, and cross the hour of  
rest;

While all the future, for thy purer soul,  
With "sober certainties" of love is blest.

That sigh of thine, not meant for human  
ear,  
Tells that these words thy humbleness  
offend;  
Yet bear me up—else faltering in the rear  
Of a steep march: support me to the  
end.

Peace settles where the intellect is meek,  
And Love is dutiful in thought and deed;  
Through Thee communion with that Love  
I seek:

The faith Heaven strengthens where *he*  
moulds the Creed. 1824.

#### "HOW RICH THAT FOREHEAD'S CALM EXPANSE"

Written at Rydal Mount. Mrs. Wordsworth's  
impression is that the Poem was written at  
Coleorton: it was certainly suggested by a Print  
at Coleorton Hall.

How rich that forehead's calm expanse!  
How bright that heaven-directed glance!  
—Waft her to glory, winged Powers,  
Ere sorrow be renewed,  
And intercourse with mortal hours  
Bring back a humbler mood!  
So looked Cecilia when she drew  
An Angel from his station;  
So looked; not ceasing to pursue  
Her tuneful adoration!  
But hand and voice alike are still;  
No sound *here* sweeps away the will  
That gave it birth: in service meek  
One upright arm sustains the cheek,  
And one across the bosom lies—  
That rose, and now forgets to rise,  
Subdued by breathless harmonies  
Of meditative feeling;  
Mute strains from worlds beyond the  
skies,  
Through the pure light of female eyes,  
Their sanctity revealing! 1824.

#### TO ———

Written at Rydal Mount. Prompted by the  
undue importance attached to personal beauty by  
some dear friends of mine.

LOOK at the fate of summer flowers,  
Which blow at daybreak, droop e'er even-  
song;  
And, grieved for their brief date, confess  
that ours,  
Measured by what we are and ought to be,  
Measured by all that, trembling, we foresee,  
Is not so long!

If human Life do pass away,  
Perishing yet more swiftly than the flower,  
If we are creatures of a *winter's* day;  
What space hath Virgin's beauty to disclose  
Her sweets, and triumph o'er the breathing  
rose?

Not even an hour!

The deepest grove whose foliage hid  
The happiest lovers Arcady might boast,  
Could not the entrance of this thought for-  
bid:

O be thou wise as they, soul-gifted Maid!  
Nor rate too high what must so quickly  
fade,

So soon be lost.

Then shall love teach some virtuous Youth  
"To draw, out of the object of his eyes,"  
The while on thee they gaze in simple  
truth,  
Hues more exalted, "a refined Form,"  
That dreads not age, nor suffers from the  
worm,

And never dies. 1824.

#### A FLOWER GARDEN

AT COLEORTON HALL, LEICESTERSHIRE

Planned by my friend, Lady Beaumont, in  
connection with the garden at Coleorton.

TELL me, ye Zephyrs! that unfold,  
While fluttering o'er this gay Recess,  
Pinions that fanned the teeming mould  
Of Eden's blissful wilderness,  
Did only softly-stealing hours  
There close the peaceful lives of flowers?

Say, when the *moving* creatures saw  
 All kinds commingled without fear,  
 Prevailed a like indulgent law  
 For the still growths that prosper here?  
 Did wanton fawn and kid forbear  
 The half-blown rose, the lily spare?

Or peeped they often from their beds  
 And prematurely disappeared,  
 Devoured like pleasure ere it spreads  
 A bosom to the sun endeared?  
 If such their harsh untimely doom,  
 It falls not *here* on bud or bloom.

All summer long the happy Eve  
 Of this fair Spot her flowers may bind,  
 Nor e'er, with ruffled fancy, grieve,  
 From the next glance she casts, to find  
 That love for little things by Fate  
 Is rendered vain as love for great.

Yet, where the guardian fence is wound,  
 So subtly are our eyes beguiled  
 We see not nor suspect a bound,  
 No more than in some forest wild;  
 The sight is free as air—or crost  
 Only by art in nature lost.

And, though the jealous turf refuse  
 By random footsteps to be prest,  
 And Teed on never-sullied dews,  
 Ye, gentle breezes from the west,  
 With all the ministers of hope  
 Are tempted to this sunny slope!

And hither throngs of birds resort;  
 Some, inmates lodged in shady nests,  
 Some, perched on stems of stately port  
 That nod to welcome transient guests;  
 While hare and leveret, seen at play,  
*Appear* not more shut out than they.

Apt emblem (for reproof of pride)  
 This delicate Enclosure shows  
 Of modest kindness, that would hide  
 The firm protection she bestows;  
 Of manners, like its viewless fence,  
 Ensuring peace to innocence.

Thus spake the moral Muse—her wing  
 Abruptly spreading to depart,  
 She left that farewell offering,  
 Memento for some docile heart;  
 That may respect the good old age

When Fancy was Truth's willing Page;  
 And Truth would skim the flowery glade,  
 Though entering but as Fancy's Shade.  
 1824.

### TO THE LADY E. B. AND THE HON. MISS P.

Composed in the Grounds of Plass Newidd,  
 near Llangollen, 1824.

In this Vale of Meditation my friend Jones resided, having been allowed by his diocesan to fix himself there without resigning his Living in Oxfordshire. He was with my wife and daughter and me when we visited these celebrated ladies who had retired, as one may say, into notice in this vale. Their cottage lay directly in the road between London and Dublin, and they were of course visited by their Irish friends as well as innumerable strangers. They took much delight in passing jokes on our friend Jones's plumpness, ruddy cheeks, and smiling countenance, as little suited to a hermit living in the Vale of Meditation. We all thought there was ample room for retort on his part, so curious was the appearance of these ladies, so elaborately sentimental about themselves and their *Caro Albergo*, as they named it in an inscription on a tree that stood opposite, the endearing epithet being preceded by the word *Ecco!* calling upon the saunterer to look about him. So oddly was one of these ladies attired that we took her, at a little distance, for a Roman Catholic priest, with a crucifix and relics hung at his neck. They were without caps, their hair bushy and white as snow, which contributed to the mistake.

A STREAM, to mingle with your favourite  
 Dec,

Along the VALE OF MEDITATION<sup>1</sup> flows;  
 So styled by those fierce Britons, pleased to  
 see

In Nature's face the expression of repose;  
 Or haply there some pious hermit chose  
 To live and die, the peace of heaven his aim;  
 To whom the wild sequestered region owes  
 At this late day, its sanctifying name.

GLYN CAFAILGAROGH, in the Cambrian  
 tongue,

In ours, the VALE OF FRIENDSHIP, let *this*  
 spot

Be named; where, faithful to a low-roofed  
 Cot,

On Deva's banks, ye have abode so long;

<sup>1</sup> Glyn Myrvr.

Sisters in love, a love allowed to climb,  
Even on this earth, above the reach of  
Time!

TO THE TORRENT AT THE DEVIL'S  
BRIDGE, NORTH WALES, 1824

How art thou named? In search of what  
strange land  
From what huge height, descending? Can  
such force  
Of waters issue from a British source,  
Or hath not Pindus fed thee, where the band  
Of Patriots scoop their freedom out, with  
hand  
Desperate as thine? Or come the inces-  
sant shocks  
From that young Stream, that smites the  
throbbing rocks  
Of Viamala? There I seem to stand,  
As in life's morn; permitted to behold,  
From the dread chasm, woods climbing  
above woods,  
In pomp that fades not; everlasting snows;  
And skies that ne'er relinquish their repose;  
Such power possess the family of floods  
Over the minds of Poets, young or old!

COMPOSED AMONG THE RUINS  
OF A CASTLE IN NORTH WALES

THROUGH shattered galleries, 'mid roofless  
halls,  
Wandering with timid footsteps oft be-  
trayed,  
The Stranger sighs, nor scruples to upbraid  
Old Time, though he, gentlest among the  
Thralls  
Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath laid  
His lenient touches, soft as light that falls,  
From the wan Moon, upon the towers and  
walls,  
Light deepening the profoundest sleep of  
shade.  
Relic of Kings! Wreck of forgotten wars,  
To winds abandoned and the prying stars,  
Time *loves* Thee! at his call the Seasons  
twine  
Luxuriant wreaths around thy forehead hoar;  
And, though past pomp no changes can  
restore,  
A soothing recompence, his gift, is thine!

1824.

ELEGIAC STANZAS

ADDRESSED TO SIR G. H. B. UPON THE  
DEATH OF HIS SISTER-IN-LAW

On Mrs. Fermor. This lady had been a widow long before I knew her. Her husband was of the family of the lady celebrated in the "Rape of the Lock," and was, I believe, a Roman Catholic. The sorrow which his death caused her was fearful in its character as described in this poem, but was subdued in course of time by the strength of her religious faith. I have been, for many weeks at a time, an inmate with her at Coleorton Hall, as were also Mrs. Wordsworth and my Sister. The truth in the sketch of her character here given was acknowledged with gratitude by her nearest relatives. She was eloquent in conversation, energetic upon public matters, open in respect to those, but slow to communicate her personal feelings; upon these she never touched in her intercourse with me, so that I could not regard myself as her confidential friend, and was accordingly surprised when I learnt she had left me a legacy of £100, as a token of her esteem. See, in further illustration, the second stanza inscribed upon her Cenotaph in Coleorton church.

O FOR a dirge! But why complain?  
Ask rather a triumphal strain  
When FERMOR'S race is run;  
A garland of immortal boughs  
To twine around the Christian's brows,  
Whose glorious work is done.

We pay a high and holy debt;  
No tears of passionate regret  
Shall stain this votive lay;  
Ill-worthy, Beaumont! were the grief  
That flings itself on wild relief  
When Saints have passed away.

Sad doom, at Sorrow's shrine to kneel,  
For ever covetous to feel,  
And impotent to bear!  
Such once was hers—to think and think  
On severed love, and only sink  
From anguish to despair!

But nature to its inmost part  
Faith had refined; and to her heart  
A peaceful cradle given:  
Calm as the dew-drop's, free to rest  
Within a breeze-fanned rose's breast  
Till it exhales to Heaven.

Was ever Spirit that could bend  
So graciously?—that could descend,  
Another's need to suit,  
So promptly from her lofty throne?—  
In works of love, in these alone,  
How restless, how minute !

Pale was her hue ; yet mortal cheek  
Ne'er kindled with a livelier streak  
When aught had suffered wrong,—  
When aught that breathes had felt a wound ;  
Such look the Oppressor might confound,  
However proud and strong.

But hushed be every thought that springs  
From out the bitterness of things ;  
Her quiet is secure ;  
No thorns can pierce her tender feet,  
Whose life was, like the violet, sweet,  
As climbing jasmine, pure—

As snowdrop on an infant's grave,  
Or lily heaving with the wave  
That feeds it and defends ;  
As Vesper, ere the star hath kissed  
The mountain top, or breathed the mist  
That from the vale ascends.

Thou takest not away, O Death !  
Thou strikest—absence perisheth,  
Indifference is no more ;  
The future brightens on our sight ;  
For on the past hath fallen a light  
That tempts us to adore. 1824.

CENOTAPH

See "Elegiac Stanzas. Addressed to Sir G. H. B. upon the death of his Sister-in-Law."

In affectionate remembrance of Frances Fermor, whose remains are deposited in the church of Claines, near Worcester, this stone is erected by her sister, Dame Margaret, wife of Sir George Beaumont, Bart., who, feeling not less than the love of a brother for the deceased, commends this memorial to the care of his heirs and successors in the possession of this place.

By vain affections unenthralled,  
Though resolute when duty called  
To meet the world's broad eye,  
Pure as the holiest cloistered nun  
That ever feared the tempting sun,  
Did Fermor live and die.  
This Tablet, hallowed by her name,

One heart-relieving tear may claim ;  
But if the pensive gloom  
Of fond regret be still thy choice,  
Exalt thy spirit, hear the voice  
Of Jesus from her tomb !

"I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE"

1824.

EPITAPH

IN THE CHAPEL-YARD OF LANGDALE,  
WESTMORELAND

Owen Lloyd, the subject of this epitaph, was born at Old Brathay, near Ambleside, and was the son of Charles Lloyd and his wife Sophia (née Pemberton), both of Birmingham, who came to reside in this part of the country soon after their marriage. They had many children, both sons and daughters, of whom the most remarkable was the subject of this epitaph. He was educated under Mr. Dawes, at Ambleside, Dr. Butler, of Shrewsbury, and lastly at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he would have been greatly distinguished as a scholar but for inherited infirmities of bodily constitution, which, from early childhood, affected his mind. His love for the neighbourhood in which he was born, and his sympathy with the habits and characters of the mountain yeomanry, in conjunction with irregular spirits, that unfitted him for facing duties in situations to which he was unaccustomed, induced him to accept the retired curacy of Langdale. How much he was beloved and honoured there, and with what feelings he discharged his duty under the oppression of severe malady, is set forth, though imperfectly, in the epitaph.

By playful smiles, (alas ! too oft  
A sad heart's sunshine, by a soft  
And gentle nature, and a free  
Yet modest hand of charity,  
Through life was OWEN LLOYD endeared  
To young and old ; and how revered  
Had been that pious spirit, a tide  
Of humble mourners testified,  
When, after pains dispensed to prove  
The measure of God's chastening love,  
Here, brought from far, his corse found  
rest,—

Fulfilment of his own request ;—  
Urged less for this Yew's shade, though he  
Planted with such fond hope the tree ;  
Less for the love of stream and rock,  
Dear as they were, than that his Flock,

When they no more their Pastor's voice  
 Could hear to guide them in their choice  
 Through good and evil, help might have,  
 Admonished, from his silent grave,  
 Of righteousness, of sins forgiven,  
 For peace on earth and bliss in heaven.

1824.

## THE CONTRAST

## THE PARROT AND THE WREN

The Parrot belonged to Mrs. Luff while living  
 at Fox-Ghyll. The Wren was one that haunted  
 for many years the summer-house between the  
 two terraces at Rydal Mount.

## I

WITHIN her gilded cage confined,  
 I saw a dazzling Belle,  
 A Parrot of that famous kind  
 Whose name is NON-PAREIL.

Like beads of glossy jet her eyes;  
 And, smoothed by Nature's skill,  
 With pearl or gleaming agate vies  
 Her finely-curved bill.

Her plummy mantle's living hues  
 In mass opposed to mass,  
 Outshine the splendour that imbues  
 The robes of pictured glass.

And, sooth to say, an apter Mate  
 Did never tempt the choice  
 Of feathered Thing most delicate  
 In figure and in voice.

But, exiled from Australian bowers,  
 And singleness her lot,  
 She trills her song with tutored powers,  
 Or mocks each casual note.

No more of pity for regrets  
 With which she may have striven!  
 Now but in wantonness she frets,  
 Or spite, if cause be given;

Arch, volatile, a sportive bird  
 By social glee inspired;  
 Ambitious to be seen or heard,  
 And pleased to be admired!

## II

THIS moss-lined shed, green, soft, and  
 dry,  
 Harbours a self-contented Wren,  
 Not shunning man's abode, though shy,  
 Almost as thought itself, of human ken.

Strange places, coverts unendear'd,  
 She never tried; the very nest  
 In which this Child of Spring was reared,  
 Is warmed, thro' winter, by her feathery  
 breast.

To the bleak winds she sometimes gives  
 A slender unexpected strain;  
 Proof that the hermitess still lives,  
 Though she appear not, and be sought in  
 vain.

Say, Dora! tell me, by yon placid moon,  
 If called to choose between the favoured  
 pair,  
 Which would you be,—the bird of the  
 saloon  
 By lady-fingers tended with nice care,  
 Caressed, applauded, upon dainties fed,  
 Or Nature's DARKLING of this mossy shed?  
 1825.

## TO A SKY-LARK

Written at Rydal Mount.

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!  
 Dost thou despise the earth where cares  
 abound?  
 Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and  
 eye  
 Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?  
 Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,  
 Those quivering wings composed, that  
 music still!

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;  
 A privacy of glorious light is thine;  
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world a  
 flood  
 Of harmony, with instinct more divine;  
 Type of the wise who soar, but never roam;  
 True to the kindred points of Heaven and  
 Home!  
 1825.

“ERE WITH COLD BEADS OF  
MIDNIGHT DEW”

Written at Rydal Mount. Suggested by the  
condition of a friend.

ERE with cold beads of midnight dew  
Had mingled tears of thine,  
I grieved, fond Youth! that thou shouldst  
sue  
To haughty Geraldine.

Immoveable by generous sighs,  
She glories in a train  
Who drag, beneath our native skies,  
An oriental chain.

Pine not like them with arms across,  
Forgetting in thy care  
How the fast-rooted trees can toss  
Their branches in mid air.

The humblest rivulet will take  
Its own wild liberties;  
And, every day, the imprisoned lake  
Is flowing in the breeze.

Then, crouch no more on suppliant knee,  
But scorn with scorn outbrave;  
A Briton, even in love, should be  
A subject, not a slave! 1826.

ODE

COMPOSED ON MAY MORNING

This and the following poem originated in the  
lines “How delicate the leafy veil,” etc.—My  
daughter and I left Rydal Mount upon a tour  
through our mountains with Mr. and Mrs. Carr  
in the month of May 1826, and as we were going  
up the vale of Newlands I was struck with the  
appearance of the little chapel gleaming through  
the veil of half-opened leaves; and the feeling  
which was then conveyed to my mind was ex-  
pressed in the stanza referred to above. As in  
the case of “Liberty” and “Humanity,” my first  
intention was to write only one poem, but subse-  
quently I broke it into two, making additions to  
each part so as to produce a consistent and  
apt

: purpling east departs  
ed the dawn,  
her couch upstarts,  
he lawn.

A quickening hope, a freshening glee,  
Foreran the expected Power,  
Whose first-drawn breath, from bush and  
tree,  
Shakes off that pearly shower.

All Nature welcomes Her whose sway  
Tempers the year's extremes;  
Who scattereth lustres o'er noon-day,  
Like morning's dewy gleams;  
While mellow warble, sprightly trill,  
The tremulous heart excite;  
And hums the balmy air to still  
The balance of delight.

Time was, blest Power! when youths and  
maids  
At peep of dawn would rise,  
And wander forth, in forest glades  
Thy birth to solemnize.  
Though mute the song—to grace the rite  
Untouched the hawthorn bough,  
Thy Spirit triumphs o'er the slight;  
Man changes, but not Thou!

Thy feathered Lieges bill and wings  
In love's disport employ;  
Warmed by thy influence, creeping things  
Awake to silent joy:  
Queen art thou still for each gay plant  
Where the slim wild deer roves;  
And served in depths where fishes haunt  
Their own mysterious groves.

Cloud-piercing peak, and trackless heath,  
Instinctive homage pay;  
Nor wants the dim-lit cave a wreath  
To honour thee, sweet May!  
Where cities fanned by thy brisk airs  
Behold a smokeless sky,  
Their puniest flower-pot-nursling dares  
To open a bright eye.

And if, on this thy natal morn,  
The pole, from which thy name  
Hath not departed, stands forlorn  
Of song and dance and game;  
Still from the village-green a vow  
Aspires to thee address,  
Wherever peace is on the brow,  
Or love within the breast.

Yes! where Love nestles thou canst teach  
The soul to love the more;



Hearts also shall thy lessons reach  
That never loved before.  
Stript is the haughty one of pride,  
The bashful freed from fear,  
While rising, like the ocean-tide,  
In flows the joyous year.

Hush, feeble lyre ! weak words refuse  
The service to prolong !  
To yon exulting thrush the Muse  
Entrusts the imperfect song ;  
His voice shall chant, in accents clear,  
Throughout the live-long day,  
Till the first silver star appear,  
The sovereignty of May. 1826.

## TO MAY

THOUGH many suns have risen and set  
Since thou, blithe May, wert born,  
And Bards, who hailed thee, may forget  
Thy gifts, thy beauty scorn ;  
There are who to a birthday strain  
Confine not harp and voice,  
But evermore throughout thy reign  
Are grateful and rejoice !

Delicious odours ! music sweet,  
Too sweet to pass away !  
Oh for a deathless song to meet  
The soul's desire—a lay  
That, when a thousand years are told,  
Should praise thee, genial Power !  
Through summer heat, autumnal cold,  
And winter's dreariest hour.

Earth, sea, thy presence feel—nor less,  
If yon ethereal blue  
With its soft smile the truth express,  
The heavens have felt it too.  
The inmost heart of man if glad  
Partakes a livelier cheer ;  
And eyes that cannot but be sad  
Let fall a brightened tear.

Since thy return, through days and weeks  
Of hope that grew by stealth,  
How many wan and faded cheeks  
Have kindled into health !  
The Old, by thee revived, have said,  
" Another year is ours ;"  
And wayworn Wanderers, poorly fed  
Have smiled upon thy flowers.

Who tripping lisps a merry song  
Amid his playful peers ?  
The tender Infant who was long  
A prisoner of fond fears ;  
But now, when every sharp-edged blast  
Is quiet in its sheath,  
His Mother leaves him free to taste  
Earth's sweetness in thy breath.

Thy help is with the weed that creeps  
Along the humblest ground ;  
No cliff so bare but on its steep  
Thy favours may be found ;  
But most on some peculiar nook  
That our own hands have drest,  
Thou and thy train are proud to look,  
And seem to love it best.

And yet how pleased we wander forth  
When May is whispering, " Come !  
" Choose from the bowers of virgin earth  
" The happiest for your home ;  
" Heaven's bounteous love through me is  
spread  
" From sunshine, clouds, winds, waves,  
" Drops on the mouldering turret's head,  
" And on your turf-clad graves ! "

Such greeting heard, away with sighs  
For lilies that must fade,  
Or " the rathe primrose as it dies  
Forsaken " in the shade !  
Vernal fruitions and desires  
Are linked in endless chase ;  
While, as one kindly growth retires,  
Another takes its place.

And what if thou, sweet May, hast known,  
Mishap by worm and blight ;  
If expectations newly blown  
Have perished in thy sight ;  
If loves and joys, while up they sprung,  
Were caught as in a snare ;  
Such is the lot of all the young,  
However bright and fair.

Lo ! Streams that April could not check  
Are patient of thy rule ;  
Gurgling in foamy water-break,  
Loitering in glassy pool :  
By thee, thee only, could be sent  
Such gentle mists as glide,  
Curling with unconfirmed intent,  
On that green mountain's side.

How delicate the leafy veil  
Through which yon house of God  
Gleams, mid the peace of this deep dale  
By few but shepherds trod !  
And lowly huts, near beaten ways,  
No sooner stand attired  
In thy fresh wreaths, than they for praise  
Peep forth, and are admired.

Season of fancy and of hope,  
Permit not for one hour,  
A blossom from thy crown to drop,  
Nor add to it a flower !  
Keep, lovely May, as if by touch  
Of self-restraining art,  
This modest charm of not too much,  
Part seen, imagined part !

1826-1834.

"ONCE I COULD HAIL (HOWE'ER  
SERENE THE SKY)"

"No faculty yet given me to espy  
The dusky Shape within her arms imbound."

Afterwards, when I could not avoid seeing it, I  
wondered at this, and the more so because, like  
most children, I had been in the habit of watching  
the moon through all her changes, and had often  
continued to gaze at it when at the full, till half  
blinded.

"Late, late yestreen I saw the new moone  
Wi' the auld moone in hir arme."

*Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,  
Percy's Reliques.*

ONCE I could hail (howe'er serene the sky)  
The Moon re-entering her monthly round,  
No faculty yet given me to espy  
The dusky Shape within her arms imbound,  
That thin memento of effulgence lost  
Which some have named her Predecessor's  
ghost.

Young, like the Crescent that above me  
shone,  
Nought I perceived within it dull or dim;  
All that appeared was suitable to One  
Whose fancy had a thousand fields to  
skim;  
To expectations spreading with wild growth,  
And hope that kept with me her plighted  
troth.

I saw (ambition quickening at the view)  
A silver boat launched on a boundless  
flood;

A pearly crest, like Dian's when it threw  
Its brightest splendour round a leafy wood;  
But not a hint from under-ground, no sign  
Fit for the glimmering brow of Proserpine.

Or was it Dian's self that seemed to move  
Before me?—nothing blemished the fair  
sight;

On her I looked whom jocund Fairies love,  
Cynthia, who puts the *little* stars to flight;  
And by that thinning magnifies the great,  
For exaltation of her sovereign state.

And when I learned to mark the spectral  
Shape

As each new Moon obeyed the call of Time,  
If gloom fell on me, swift was my escape;  
Such happy privilege hath life's gay Prime,  
To see or not to see, as best may please  
A buoyant Spirit, and a heart at ease.

Now, dazzling Stranger! when thou meet'st  
my glance,

Thy dark Associate ever I discern;  
Emblem of thoughts too eager to advance  
While I salute my joys, thoughts sad or  
stern;

Shades of past bliss, or phantoms that, to  
gain

Their fill of promised lustre, wait in vain.

So changes mortal Life with fleeting years;  
A mournful change, should Reason fail to  
bring

The timely insight that can temper fears,  
And from vicissitude remove its sting;  
While Faith aspires to seats in that domain  
Where joys are perfect—neither wax nor  
wane.

1826.

"THE MASSY WAYS, CARRIED  
ACROSS THESE HEIGHTS"

The walk is what we call the *Far-terrace*,  
beyond the summer-house at Rydal Mount. The  
lines were written when we were afraid of being  
obliged to quit the place to which we were so  
much attached.

THE massy Ways, carried across these  
heights

By Roman perseverance, are destroyed,  
Or hidden under ground, like sleeping  
worms.

How venture then to hope that Time will  
spare

This humble Walk? Yet on the mountain's  
side

A POET'S hand first shaped it; and the  
steps

Of that same Bard—repeated to and fro  
At morn, at noon, and under moonlight  
skies

Through the vicissitudes of many a year—  
Forbade the weeds to creep o'er its grey  
line.

No longer, scattering to the heedless winds  
The vocal raptures of fresh poesy,  
Shall he frequent these precincts; locked  
no more

In earnest converse with belovèd Friends,  
Here will he gather stores of ready bliss,  
As from the beds and borders of a garden  
Choice flowers are gathered! But, if  
Power may spring

Out of a farewell yearning—favoured more  
Than kindred wishes mated suitably  
With vain regrets—the Exile would con-  
sign

This Walk, his loved possession, to the  
care

Of those pure Minds that reverence the  
Muse. 1826.

### THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN

These verses perhaps had better be transferred to the class of "Italian Poems." I had observed in the Newspaper, that the Pillar of Trajan was given as a subject for a prize-poem in English verse. I had a wish perhaps that my son, who was then an undergraduate at Oxford, should try his fortune, and I told him so; but he, not having been accustomed to write verse, wisely declined to enter on the task; whereupon I showed him these lines as a proof of what might, without difficulty, be done on such a subject.

WHERE towers are crushed, and unfor-  
bidden weeds

O'er mutilated arches shed their seeds;  
And temples, doomed to milder change,  
unfold

A new magnificence that vies with old;

Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood  
A votive Column, spared by fire and  
flood:—

And, though the passions of man's fretful  
race

Have never ceased to eddy round its base,  
Not injured more by touch of meddling  
hands

Than a lone obelisk, 'mid Nubian sands,  
Or aught in Syrian deserts left to save  
From death the memory of the good and  
brave.

Historic figures round the shaft embost  
Ascend, with lineaments in air not lost:  
Still as he turns, the charmed spectator  
sees

Group winding after group with dream-like  
ease;

Triumphs in sunbright gratitude displayed,  
Or softly stealing into modest shade.

—So, pleased with purple clusters to  
entwine

Some lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring  
vine;

The woodbine so, with spiral grace, and  
breathes

Wide-spreading odours from her flowery  
wreaths.

Borne by the Muse from rills in shepherds'  
ears

Murmuring but one smooth story for all  
years,

I gladly commune with the mind and  
heart

Of him who thus survives by classic art,  
His actions witness, venerate his mien,  
And study Trajan as by Pliny seen;

Behold how fought the Chief whose  
conquering sword

Stretched far as earth might own a single  
lord;

In the delight of moral prudence schooled,  
How feelingly at home the Sovereign  
ruled;

Best of the good—in pagan faith allied  
To more than Man, by virtue deified.

Memorial Pillar! 'mid the wrecks of  
Time

Preserve thy charge with confidence sub-  
lime—

The exultations, pomps, and cares of  
Rome,

Whence half the breathing world received  
its doom;

Things that recoil from language; that, if shown

By apt pencil, from the light had flown.  
A Pontiff, Trajan *here* the Gods implores,  
*There* greets an Embassy from Indian shores;

Lo! he harangues his cohorts—*there* the storm

Of battle meets him in authentic form!  
Unharnessed, naked, troops of Moorish horse

Sweep to the charge; more high, the Dacian force,

To hoof and finger mailed;<sup>1</sup>—yet, high or low,

None bleed, and none lie prostrate but the foe;

In every Roman, through all turns of fate,  
Is Roman dignity inviolate;

Spirit in him pre-eminent, who guides,  
Supports, adorns, and over all presides;  
Distinguished only by inherent state  
From honoured Instruments that round him wait;

Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the test

Of outward symbol, nor will deign to rest  
On aught by which another is deprest.

—Alas! that One thus disciplined could toil

To enslave whole nations on their native soil;

So emulous of Macedonian fame,  
That, when his age was measured with his aim,

He drooped, 'mid else unclouded victories,  
And turned his eagles back with deep-drawn sighs:

O weakness of the Great! O folly of the Wise!

Where now the haughty Empire that was spread

With such fond hope? her very speech is dead;

Yet glorious Art the power of Time defies,  
And Trajan still, through various enterprise,  
Mounts, in this fine illusion, toward the skies:

Still are we present with the imperial Chief,  
Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief  
Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,  
Becomes with all her years a vision of the Mind.

1826.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## ON SEEING A NEEDLECASE IN THE FORM OF A HARP

THE WORK OF E. M. S.

Frowns are on every Muse's face,  
Reproaches from their lips are sent,  
That mimicry should thus disgrace  
The noble Instrument.

A very Harp in all but size!  
Needles for strings in apt gradation!  
Minerva's self would stigmatize  
The unclassic profanation.

Even her *own* needle that subdued  
Arachne's rival spirit,  
Though wrought in Vulcan's happiest mood,  
Such honour could not merit.

And this, too, from the Laureate's Child,  
A living lord of melody!  
How will her Sire be reconciled  
To the refined indignity?

I spake, when whispered a low voice,  
"Bard! moderate your ire;  
Spirits of all degrees rejoice  
In presence of the lyre.

The Minstrels of Pygmean bands,  
Dwarf Genii, moonlight-loving Fays,  
Have shells to fit their tiny hands  
And suit their slender lays.

Some, still more delicate of ear,  
Have lutes (believe my words)  
Whose framework is of gossamer,  
While sunbeams are the chords.

Gay, Sylphs this miniature will court,  
Made vocal by their brushing wings,  
And sullen Gnomes will learn to sport  
Around its polished strings;

Whence strains to love-sick maiden dear,  
While in her lonely bower she tries  
To cheat the thought she cannot cheer,  
By fanciful embroideries.

Trust, angry Bard! a knowing Sprite,  
Nor think the Harp her lot deploras!  
Though 'mid the stars the Lyre shine bright,  
Love *stoops* as fondly as he soars."

1827.

## TO ———

In the cottage, Town-end, Grasmere, one afternoon in 1801, my sister read to me the Sonnets of Milton. I had long been well acquainted with them, but I was particularly struck on that occasion by the dignified simplicity and majestic harmony that runs through most of them,—in character so totally different from the Italian, and still more so from Shakspeare's fine Sonnets. I took fire, if I may be allowed to say so, and produced three Sonnets the same afternoon, the first I ever wrote except an irregular one at school. Of these three, the only one I distinctly remember is "I grieved for Buonaparté." One was never written down: the third, which was, I believe, preserved, I cannot particularise.

HAPPY the feeling from the bosom thrown  
In perfect shape (whose beauty Time shall spare

Though a breath made it) like a bubble blown

For summer pastime into wanton air;  
Happy the thought best likened to a stone  
Of the sea-beach, when, polished with nice care,

Veins it discovers exquisite and rare,  
Which for the loss of that moist gleam atone  
That tempted first to gather it. That here,  
O chief of Friends! such feelings I present,  
To thy regard, with thoughts so fortunate,  
Were a vain notion; but the hope is dear,  
That thou, if not with partial joy elate,  
Wilt smile upon this gift with more than mild content!<sup>1</sup>

1827.

"HER ONLY PILOT THE SOFT  
BREEZE"

HER only pilot the soft breeze, the boat  
Lingers, but Fancy is well satisfied;  
With keen-eyed Hope, with Memory, at her side,

And the glad Muse at liberty to note  
All that to each is precious, as we float  
Gently along; regardless who shall chide  
If the heavens smile, and leave us free to glide,

Happy Associates breathing air remote  
From trivial cares. But, Fancy and the Muse,

Why have I crowded this small bark with you

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

And others of your kind, ideal crew!  
While here sits One whose brightness owes its hues

To flesh and blood; no Goddess from above,

No fleeting Spirit, but my own true love?  
1827.

"WHY, MINSTREL, THESE UNTUNEFUL MURMURINGS"

"WHY, Minstrel, these untuneful murmurings—

Dull, flagging notes that with each other jar?"

"Think, gentle Lady, of a Harp so far  
From its own country, and forgive the strings."

A simple answer! but even so forth springs,  
From the Castalian fountain of the heart,  
The Poetry of Life, and all *that* Art  
Divine of words quickening insensate things.  
From the submissive necks of guiltless men  
Stretched on the block, the glittering axe recoils;

Sun, moon, and stars, all struggle in the toils

Of mortal sympathy; what wonder then  
That the poor Harp distempered music yields

To its sad Lord, far from his native fields?  
1827.

## TO S. H.

EXCUSE is needless when with love sincere  
Of occupation, not by fashion led,  
Thou turn'st the Wheel that slept with dust o'erspread;

*My* nerves from no such murmur shrink,—  
tho' near,

Soft as the Dorkhawk's to a distant ear,  
When twilight shades darken the mountain's head.

Even She who toils to spin our vital thread  
Might smile on work, O Lady, once so dear  
To household virtues. Venerable Art,  
Torn from the Poor! yet shall kind Heaven protect

Its own; though Rulers, with undue respect,  
Trusting to crowded factory and mart  
And proud discoveries of the intellect,  
Heed not the pillage of man's ancient heart.

1827.

## DECAY OF PIETY

Attendance at church on prayer-days, Wednesday and Fridays and Holidays, received a shock at the Revolution. It is now, however, happily reviving. The ancient people described in this Sonnet were among the last of that pious class. May we hope that the practice, now in some degree renewed, will continue to spread.

OFT have I seen, ere Time had ploughed  
my cheek,

Matrons and Sires—who, punctual to the call  
Of their loved Church, on fast or festival  
Through the long year the house of Prayer  
would seek :

By Christmas snows, by visitation bleak  
Of Easter winds, unscared, from hut or hall  
They came to lowly bench or sculptured stall,  
But with one fervour of devotion meek.

I see the places where they once were known,  
And ask, surrounded even by kneeling  
crowds,

Is ancient Piety for ever flown ?

Alas ! even then they seemed like fleecy  
clouds

That, struggling through the western sky,  
have won

Their pensive light from a departed sun !  
1827.

## "SCORN NOT THE SONNET"

Composed, almost extempore, in a short walk  
on the western side of Rydal Lake.

SCORN not the Sonnet; Critic, you have  
frowned,

Mindless of its just honours; with this key  
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody  
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's  
wound;

A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;  
With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief;  
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf  
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned  
His visionary brow: a glow-worm lamp,  
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-  
land

To struggle through dark ways; and, when  
a damp

Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand  
The Thing became a trumpet; whence he  
blew

Soul-animating strains—alas, too few !  
1827.

"FAIR PRIME OF LIFE ! WERE IT  
ENOUGH TO GILD"

Suggested by observation of the way in which  
a young friend, whom I do not choose to name,  
misspent his time and misapplied his talents. He  
took afterwards a better course, and became a  
useful member of society, respected, I believe,  
wherever he has been known.

FAIR Prime of life ! were it enough to gild  
With ready sunbeams every straggling  
shower;

And, if an unexpected cloud should lower,  
Swiftly thereon a rainbow arch to build  
For Fancy's errands,—then, from fields  
half-tilled

Gathering green weeds to mix with poppy  
flower,

Thee might thy Minions crown, and chant  
thy power,

Unpitied by the wise, all censure stilled.

Ah ! show that worthier honours are thy  
due;

Fair Prime of life ! arouse the deeper heart ;  
Confirm the Spirit glorying to pursue  
Some path of steep ascent and lofty aim ;  
And, if there be a joy that slights the claim  
Of grateful memory, bid that joy depart.  
1827.

## RETIREMENT

IF the whole weight of what we think and  
feel,

Save only far as thought and feeling blend  
With action, were as nothing, patriot Friend !  
From thy remonstrance would be no appeal ;  
But to promote and fortify the weal

Of our own Being is her paramount end ;  
A truth which they alone shall comprehend  
Who shun the mischief which they cannot  
heal.

Peace in these feverish times is sovereign  
bliss :

Here, with no thirst but what the stream  
can slake,

And startled only by the rustling brake,  
Cool air I breathe; while the unincum-  
bered Mind

By some weak aims at services assigned  
To gentle Natures, thanks not Heaven amiss.  
1827.

"THERE IS A PLEASURE IN  
POETIC PAINS"

*THERE is a pleasure in poetic pains  
Which only Poets know;—'twas rightly  
said;*

Whom could the Muses else allure to tread  
Their smoothest paths, to wear their light-  
est chains?

When happiest Fancy has inspired the  
strains,

How oft the malice of one luckless word  
Pursues the Enthusiast to the social board,  
Haunts him belated on the silent plains!  
Yet he repines not, if his thought stand  
clear,

At last, of hindrance and obscurity,  
Fresh as the star that crowns the brow of  
morn;

Bright, speckless, as a softly-moulded tear  
The moment it has left the virgin's eye,  
Or rain-drop lingering on the pointed  
thorn. 1827.

RECOLLECTION OF THE POR-  
TRAIT OF KING HENRY  
EIGHTH, TRINITY LODGE,  
CAMBRIDGE

THE imperial Stature, the colossal stride,  
Are yet before me; yet do I behold  
The broad full visage, chest of amplest  
mould,

The vestments 'broidered with barbaric  
pride:

And lo! a poniard, at the Monarch's side,  
Hangs ready to be grasped in sympathy  
With the keen threatenings of that fulgent  
eye,

Below the white-rimmed bonnet, far-des-  
cried.

Who trembles now at thy capricious mood?  
'Mid those surrounding Worthies, haughty  
King,

We rather think, with grateful mind sedate,  
How Providence educeth, from the spring  
Of lawless will, unlooked-for streams of  
good,

Which neither force shall check nor time  
abate! 1827.

"WHEN PHILOCTETES IN THE  
LEMNIAN ISLE"

WHEN Philoctetes in the Lemnian isle  
Like a form sculptured on a monument  
Lay crouched; on him or his dread bow  
unbent

Some wild Bird oft might settle and beguile  
The rigid features of a transient smile,  
Disperse the tear, or to the sigh give vent,  
Slackening the pains of ruthless banishment  
From his loved home, and from heroic toil.  
And trust that spiritual Creatures round us  
move,

Griefs to allay which Reason cannot heal;  
Yea, veriest reptiles have sufficed to prove  
To fettered wretchedness, that no Bastile  
Is deep enough to exclude the light of love,  
Though man for brother man has ceased to  
feel. 1827.

"WHILE ANNA'S PEERS AND  
EARLY PLAYMATES TREAD"

This is taken from the account given by Miss  
Jewsbury of the pleasure she derived, when long  
confined to her bed by sickness, from the in-  
animate object on which this Sonnet turns.

WHILE Anna's peers and early playmates  
tread,

In freedom, mountain-turf and river's  
marge;

Or float with music in the festal barge;  
Rein the proud steed, or through the dance  
are led;

Her doom it is to press a weary bed—  
Till oft her guardian Angel, to some charge  
More urgent called, will stretch his wings  
at large,

And friends too rarely prop the languid head.  
Yet, helped by Genius—untired comforter,  
The presence even of a stuffed Owl for her  
Can cheat the time; sending her fancy out  
To ivied castles and to moonlight skies,  
Though he can neither stir a plume, nor  
shout;

Nor veil, with restless film, his staring eyes.  
1827.

TO THE CUCKOO

NOT the whole warbling grove in concert  
heard

When sunshine follows shower, the breast  
can thrill

Like the first summons, Cuckoo ! of thy bill,  
With its twin notes inseparably paired.

The captive 'mid damp vaults unsunned,  
unaired,

Measuring the periods of his lonely doom,  
That cry can reach ; and to the sick man's  
room

Sends gladness, by no languid smile de-  
clared.

The lordly eagle-race through hostile search  
May perish ; time may come when never more

The wilderness shall hear the lion roar ;  
But, long as cock shall crow from house-  
hold perch

To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall speed  
thy wing,

And thy erratic voice be faithful to the  
Spring !

1827.

### THE INFANT M—— M——

The infant was Mary Monkhouse, the only  
daughter of my friend and cousin Thomas Monk-  
house.

UNQUIET Childhood here by special grace  
Forgets her nature, opening like a flower  
That neither feeds nor wastes its vital power  
In painful struggles. Months each other  
chase,

And nought untunes that Infant's voice ; no  
trace

Of fretful temper sullies her pure cheek ;  
Prompt, lively, self-sufficing, yet so meek  
That one enrapt with gazing on her face  
(Which even the placid innocence of death  
Could scarcely make more placid, heaven  
more bright)

Might learn to picture, for the eye of faith,  
The Virgin, as she shone with kindred light ;  
A nursling couched upon her mother's knee,  
Beneath some shady palm of Galilee.

1827.

### TO ROTH A Q——

Rotha, the daughter of my son-in-law Mr.  
Quillinan.

ROTHA, my Spiritual Child ! this head was  
grey

When at the sacred font for thee I stood ;

Pledged till thou reach the verge of woman-  
hood,

And shalt become thy own sufficient stay :  
Too late, I feel, sweet Orphan ! was the day

For steadfast hope the contract to fulfil ;  
Yet shall my blessing hover o'er thee still,  
Embodied in the music of this Lay,

Breathed forth beside the peaceful mountain  
Stream <sup>1</sup>

Whose murmur soothed thy languid  
Mother's ear

After her throes, this Stream of name more  
dear

Since thou dost bear it, — a memorial theme  
For others ; for thy future self, a spell

To summon fancies out of Time's dark cell.

1827.

### TO ———, IN HER SEVENTIETH YEAR

Lady Fitzgerald, as described to me by Lady  
Beaumont.

SUCH age how beautiful ! O Lady bright,  
Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined  
By favouring Nature and a saintly Mind  
To something purer and more exquisite  
Than flesh and blood ; whene'er thou  
meet'st my sight,

When I behold thy blanched unwithered  
cheek,

Thy temples fringed with locks of gleaming  
white,

And head that droops because the soul is  
meek,

Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I compare ;  
That child of winter, prompting thoughts  
that climb

From desolation toward the genial prime ;  
Or with the Moon conquering earth's misty  
air,

And filling more and more with crystal light  
As pensive Evening deepens into night.

1827.

### " IN MY MIND'S EYE A TEMPLE, LIKE A CLOUD "

In my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud  
Slowly surmounting some invidious hill,

<sup>1</sup> The river Rotha, that flows into Windermere  
from the lakes of Grassmere and Rydal.



Rose out of darkness : the bright Work  
stood still :  
And might of its own beauty have been  
proud,  
But it was fashioned and to God was vowed  
By Virtues that diffused, in every part,  
Spirit divine through forms of human art :  
Faith had her arch—her arch, when winds  
blow loud,  
Into the consciousness of safety thrilled ;  
And Love her towers of dread foundation  
laid  
Under the grave of things ; Hope had her  
spire  
Star-high, and pointing still to something  
higher  
Trembling I gazed, but heard a voice—it  
said,  
“ Hell-gates are powerless Phantoms when  
*we* build.” 1827.

“GO BACK TO ANTIQUE AGES, IF  
THINE EYES”

Go back to antique ages, if thine eyes  
The genuine mien and character would trace  
Of the rash Spirit that still holds her place,  
Prompting the world's audacious vanities !  
Go back, and see the Tower of Babel rise ;  
The pyramid extend its monstrous base,  
For some Aspirant of our short-lived race,  
Anxious an æry name to immortalize.  
There, too, ere wiles and politic dispute  
Gave specious colouring to aim and act,  
See the first mighty Hunter leave the brute—  
To chase mankind, with men in armies  
packed  
For his field-pastime high and absolute,  
While, to dislodge his game, cities are  
sacked ! 1827.

IN THE WOODS OF RYDAL

WILD Redbreast ! hadst thou at Jemima's  
lip  
Pecked, as at mine, thus boldly, Love  
might say,  
A half-blown rose had tempted thee to sip  
Its glistening dew ; but hallowed is the clay  
Which the Muse warms ; and I, whose head  
is grey,  
Am not unworthy of thy fellowship ;

Nor could I let one thought—one notion—  
slip  
That might thy sylvan confidence betray.  
For are we not all His without whose care  
Vouchsafed no sparrow falleth to the  
ground ?  
Who gives his Angels wings to speed  
through air,  
And rolls the planets through the blue  
profound ;  
Then peck or perch, fond Flutterer ! nor  
forbear  
To trust a Poet in still musings bound.<sup>1</sup>  
1827.

CONCLUSION

TO —

IF these brief Records, by the Muses' art  
Produced as lonely Nature or the strife  
That animates the scenes of public life<sup>2</sup>  
Inspired, may in thy leisure claim a part ;  
And if these Transcripts of the private heart  
Have gained a sanction from thy falling  
tears ;  
Then I repent not. But my soul hath fears  
Breathed from eternity ; for, as a dart  
Cleaves the blank air, Life flies : now every  
day  
Is but a glimmering spoke in the swift wheel  
Of the revolving week. Away, away,  
All fitful cares, all transitory zeal !  
So timely Grace the immortal wing may  
heal,  
And honour rest upon the senseless clay.  
1827.

A MORNING EXERCISE

Written at Rydal Mount. I could wish the  
last five stanzas of this to be read with the poem  
addressed to the skylark.

FANCY, who leads the pastimes of the glad,  
Full oft is pleased a wayward dart to throw ;  
Sending sad shadows after things not sad,  
Peopling the harmless fields with signs of  
woe :  
Beneath her sway, a simple forest cry  
Becomes an echo of man's misery.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

<sup>2</sup> This line alludes to Sonnets which will be  
found in another Class.

Blithe ravens croak of death; and when  
the owl

Tries his two voices for a favourite strain—  
*Tu-whit—Tu-who!* the unsuspecting fowl  
Forebodes mishap or seems but to complain;  
Fancy, intent to harass and annoy,  
Can thus pervert the evidence of joy.

Through border wilds where naked In-  
dians stray,

Myriads of notes attest her subtle skill;  
A feathered task-master cries, "WORK  
AWAY!"

And, in thy iteration, "WHIP POOR  
WILL!"<sup>1</sup>

Is heard the spirit of a toil-worn slave,  
Lashed out of life, not quiet in the grave.

What wonder? at her bidding, ancient lays  
Steeped in dire grief the voice of Philomel;  
And that fleet messenger of summer days,  
The Swallow, twittered subject to like spell;  
But ne'er could Fancy bend the buoyant Lark  
To melancholy service—hark! O hark!

The daisy sleeps upon the dewy lawn,  
Not lifting yet the head that evening boding;  
But *He* is risen, a later star of dawn,  
Glittering and twinkling nearyon rosy cloud;  
Bright gem instinct with music, vocal spark;  
The happiest bird that sprang out of the  
Ark!

Hail, blest above all kinds!—Supremely  
skilled

Restless with fixed to balance, high with low,  
Thou leav'st the halcyon free her hopes to  
build

On such forbearance as the deep may show;  
Perpetual flight, unchecked by earthly ties,  
Leav'st to the wandering bird of paradise.

Faithful, though swift as lightning, the  
meek dove;

Yet more hath Nature reconciled in thee;  
So constant with thy downward eye of love,  
Yet, in aerial singleness, so free;  
So humble, yet so ready to rejoice  
In power of wing and never-weary voice.

To the last point of vision, and beyond,  
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-prompted  
strain,

<sup>1</sup> See Waterton's *Wanderings in South America*.

(*'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond*)  
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:  
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege!  
to sing

All independent of the leafy spring.

How would it please old Ocean to partake,  
With sailors longing for a breeze in vain,  
The harmony thy notes most gladly make  
Where earth resembles most his own  
domain!

Urania's self might welcome with pleased ear  
These matins mounting towards her native  
sphere.

Chanter by heaven attracted, whom no bars  
To day-light known deter from that pursuit,  
'Tis well that some sage instinct, when the  
stars

Come forth at evening, keeps Thee still and  
mute;

For not an eyelid could to sleep incline  
Wert thou among them, singing as they  
shine! 1828.

### THE TRIAD

Written at Rydal Mount. The Girls, Edith  
Southey, my daughter Dora, and Sara Coleridge.

SHOW me the noblest Youth of present  
time,

Whose trembling fancy would to love give  
birth;

Some God or Hero, from the Olympian  
clime

Returned, to seek a Consort upon earth;  
Or, in no doubtful prospect, let me see

The brightest star of ages yet to be,  
And I will mate and match him blissfully.

I will not fetch a Naiad from a flood  
Pure as herself—(song lacks not mightier  
power)

Nor leaf-crowned Dryad from a pathless  
wood,

Nor Sea-nymph glistening from her coral  
bower;

Mere Mortals bodied forth in vision still,  
Shall with Mount Ida's triple lustre fill

The chaster coverts of a British hill.  
"Appear!—obey my lyre's command!

Come, like the Graces, hand in hand!  
For ye, though not by birth allied,

Are Sisters in the bond of love;

Nor shall the tongue of envious pride  
Presume those interweavings to reprove  
In you, which that fair progeny of Jove,  
Learned from the tuneful spheres that glide  
In endless union, earth and sea above."

—I sing in vain;—the pines have hushed  
their waving:

A peerless Youth expectant at my side,  
Breathless as they, with unabated craving  
Looks to the earth, and to the vacant air;  
And, with a wandering eye that seems to  
chide,

Asks of the clouds what occupants they  
hide:—

But why solicit more than sight could bear,  
By casting on a moment all we dare?  
Invoke we those bright Beings one by one;  
And what was boldly promised, truly shall  
be done.

"Fear not a constraining measure!

—Yielding to this gentle spell,  
Lucida! from domes of pleasure,  
Or from cottage-sprinkled dell,  
Come to regions solitary,  
Where the eagle builds her airy,  
Above the hermit's long-forsaken cell!"

—She comes!—behold  
That Figure, like a ship with snow-white  
sail!

Nearer she draws; a breeze uplifts her veil;  
Upon her coming wait  
As pure a sunshine and as soft a gale  
As e'er, on herbage covering earthly mould,  
Tempted the bird of Juno to unfold  
His richest splendour—when his veering  
gait

And every motion of his starry train  
Seem governed by a strain  
Of music, audible to him alone.

"O Lady, worthy of earth's proudest  
throne!

Nor less, by excellence of nature, fit  
Beside an unambitious hearth to sit  
Domestic queen, where grandeur is un-  
known;

What living man could fear  
The worst of Fortune's malice, wert Thou  
near,

Humbling that lily-stem, thy sceptre meek,  
That its fair flowers may from his cheek  
Brush the too happy tear?

—Queen, and handmaid lowly!  
Whose skill can speed the day with lively  
cares,

And banish melancholy

By all that mind invents or hand prepares;  
O Thou, against whose lip, without its  
smile

And in its silence even, no heart is proof;  
Whose goodness, sinking deep, would  
reconcile

The softest Nursling of a gorgeous palace  
To the bare life beneath the hawthorn-roof  
Of Sherwood's Archer, or in caves of  
Wallace—

Who that hath seen thy beauty could con-  
tent

His soul with but a *glimpse* of heavenly  
day?

Who that hath loved thee, but would lay  
His strong hand on the wind, if it were  
bent

To take thee in thy majesty away?  
Pass onward (even the glancing deer  
Till we depart intrude not here;)

That mossy slope, o'er which the woodbine  
throws

A canopy, is smoothed for thy repose!"

—Glad moment is it when the throng  
Of warblers in full concert strong  
Strive, and not vainly strive, to rout  
The lagging shower, and force coy Phoebus  
out,  
Met by the rainbow's form divine,  
Issuing from her cloudy shrine;—  
So may the thrillings of the lyre  
Prevail to further our desire,  
While to these shades a sister Nymph I  
call.

"Come, if the notes thine ear may  
pierce,

Come, youngest of the lovely Three,  
Submissive to the might of verse  
And the dear voice of harmony,  
By none more deeply felt than Thee!"

—I sang; and lo! from pastimes virginal  
She hastens to the tents  
Of nature, and the lonely elements.  
Air sparkles round her with a dazzling  
sheen;

But mark her glowing cheek, her vesture  
green!

And, as if wishful to disarm  
Or to repay the potent Charm,  
She bears the stringed lute of old romance,  
That cheered the trellised arbour's privacy,  
And soothed war-wearied knights in raf-  
tered hall.

How vivid, yet how delicate, her glee !  
So tripped the Muse, inventress of the  
dance ;

So, truant in waste woods, the blithe  
Euphrosyne !

But the ringlets of that head  
Why are they ungarlanded ?  
Why bedeck her temples less  
Than the simplest shepherdess ?  
Is it not a brow inviting  
Choicest flowers that ever breathed,  
Which the myrtle would delight in  
With Idalian rose enwreathed ?  
But her humility is well content  
With *one* wild floweret (call it not forlorn)  
FLOWER OF THE WINDS, beneath her  
bosom worn—

Yet more for love than ornament.  
Open, ye thickets ! let her fly,  
Swift as a Thracian Nymph o'er field and  
height !

For She, to all but those who love her,  
shy,  
Would gladly vanish from a Stranger's  
sight ;

Though where she is beloved and loves,  
Light as the wheeling butterfly she moves ;  
Her happy spirit as a bird is free,  
That rifles blossoms on a tree,  
Turning them inside out with arch audacity.  
Alas ! how little can a moment show  
Of an eye where feeling plays  
In ten thousand dewy rays ;  
A face o'er which a thousand shadows go !  
—She stops— is fastened to that rivulet's  
side ;

And there (while, with sedater mien,  
O'er timid waters that have scarcely left  
Their birthplace in the rocky cleft  
She bends) at leisure may be seen  
Features to old ideal grace allied,  
Amid their smiles and dimples dignified—  
Fit countenance for the soul of primal  
truth ;

The bland composure of eternal youth !  
What more changeful than the sea ?  
But over his great tides  
Fidelity presides ;  
And this light-hearted Maiden constant is  
as he.

High is her aim as heaven above,  
And wide as ether her good-will ;  
And, like the lowly reed, her love  
Can drink its nurture from the scantiest rill :

Insight as keen as frosty star  
Is to *her* charity no bar,  
Nor interrupts her frolic graces  
When she is, far from these wild places,  
Encircled by familiar faces.  
O the charm that manners draw,  
Nature, from thy genuine law !  
If from what her hand would do,  
Her voice would utter, aught ensue  
Untoward or unfit ;  
She, in benign affections pure,  
In self-forgetfulness secure,  
Sheds round the transient harm or vague  
mischance

A light unknown to tutored elegance :  
Her's is not a cheek shame-stricken,  
But her blushes are joy-flushes ;  
And the fault (if fault it be)  
Only ministers to quicken  
Laughter-loving gaiety,  
And kindle sportive wit—  
Leaving this Daughter of the mountains free  
As if she knew that Oberon king of Faery  
Had crossed her purpose with some quaint  
vagary,

And heard his viewless bands  
Over their mirthful triumph clapping hands.

" Last of the Three, though eldest born,  
Reveal thyself, like pensive Morn  
Touched by the skylark's earliest note,  
Ere humbler gladness be afloat.  
But whether in the semblance drest  
Of Dawn—or Eve, fair vision of the west,  
Come with each anxious hope subdued  
By woman's gentle fortitude,  
Each grief, through meekness, settling into  
rest."

—Or I would hail thee when some high-  
wrought page

Of a closed volume lingering in thy hand  
Has raised thy spirit to a peaceful stand  
Among the glories of a happier age."  
Her brow hath opened on me—see it there,  
Brightening the umbrage of her hair ;  
So gleams the crescent moon, that loves  
To be descried through shady groves.  
Tenderest bloom is on her cheek ;  
Wish not for a richer streak ;  
Nor dread the depth of meditative eye ;  
But let thy love, upon that azure field  
Of thoughtfulness and beauty, yield  
Its homage offered up in purity.  
What would'st thou more ? In sunny  
glade,

Or under leaves of thickest shade,  
Was such a stillness e'er diffused  
Since earth grew calm while angels mused?  
Softly she treads, as if her foot were loth  
To crush the mountain dew-drops—soon  
to melt

On the flower's breast; as if she felt  
That flowers themselves, whate'er their hue,  
With all their fragrance, all their glistening,  
Call to the heart for inward listening—  
And though for bridal wreaths and tokens  
true

Welcomed wisely; though a growth  
Which the careless shepherd sleeps on,  
As fitly spring from turf the mourner weeps  
on—

And without wrong are cropped the marble  
tomb to strew.

The Charm is over; the mute Phantoms  
gone,

Nor will return—but droop not, favoured  
Youth;

The apparition that before thee shone  
Obeyed a summons covetous of truth.  
From these wild rocks thy footsteps I will  
guide

To bowers in which thy fortune may be  
tried,

And one of the bright Three become thy  
happy Bride. 1828.

### THE WISHING-GATE

Written at Rydal Mount. See also "Wishing-  
gate Destroyed."

In the vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old  
high-way leading to Ambleside, is a gate, which,  
time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-  
gate, from a belief that wishes formed or indulged  
there have a favourable issue.

HOPE rules a land for ever green:  
All powers that serve the bright-eyed Queen  
Are confident and gay;  
Clouds at her bidding disappear;  
Points she to aught?—the bliss draws near,  
And Fancy smooths the way.

Not such the land of Wishes—there  
Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer,  
And thoughts with things at strife;  
Yet how forlorn, should ye depart  
Ye superstitions of the heart,  
How poor, were human life!

When magic lore abjured its might,  
Ye did not forfeit one dear right,  
One tender claim abate;  
Witness this symbol of your sway,  
Surviving near the public way,  
The rustic Wishing-gate!

Inquire not if the faery race  
Shed kindly influence on the place,  
Ere northward they retired;  
If here a warrior left a spell,  
Panting for glory as he fell;  
Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,  
Composed with Nature's finest care,  
And in her fondest love—  
Peace to embosom and content—  
To overawe the turbulent,  
The selfish to improve.

Yea! even the Stranger from afar,  
Reclining on this moss-grown bar,  
Unknowning, and unknown,  
The infection of the ground partakes,  
Longing for his Beloved—who makes  
All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious Spirits fear  
The mystic stirrings that are here,  
The ancient faith disclaim?  
The local Genius ne'er befriends  
Desires whose course in folly ends,  
Whose just reward is shame.

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,  
If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,  
Here crave an easier lot;  
If some have thirsted to renew  
A broken vow, or bind a true,  
With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast  
Upon the irrevocable past,  
Some Penitent sincere  
May for a worthier future sigh,  
While trickles from his downcast eye  
No unavailing tear.

The Worldling, pining to be freed  
From turmoil, who would turn or speed  
The current of his fate,  
Might stop before this favoured scene,  
At Nature's call, nor blush to lean  
Upon the Wishing-gate.

The Sage, who feels how blind, how weak  
Is man, though loth such help to *seek*,

Yet, passing, here might pause,  
And thirst for insight to allay  
Misgiving, while the crimson day  
In quietness withdraws;

Or when the church-clock's knell profound  
To Time's first step across the bound  
Of midnight makes reply;  
Time pressing on with starry crest,  
To filial sleep upon the breast  
Of dread eternity. 1828.

### THE WISHING-GATE DESTROYED

'Tis gone—with old belief and dream  
That round it clung, and tempting scheme  
Released from fear and doubt;  
And the bright landscape too must lie,  
By this blank wall, from every eye,  
Relentlessly shut out.

Bear witness ye who seldom passed  
That opening—but a look ye cast  
Upon the lake below,  
What spirit-stirring power it gained  
From faith which here was entertained,  
Though reason might say no.

Blest is that ground, where, o'er the springs  
Of history, Glory claps her wings,  
Fame sheds the exulting tear;  
Yet earth is wide, and many a nook  
Unheard of is, like this, a book  
For modest meanings dear.

It was in sooth a happy thought  
That grafted, on so fair a spot,  
So confident a token  
Of coming good;—the charm is fled,  
Indulgent centuries spun a thread,  
Which one harsh day has broken.

Alas! for him who gave the word;  
Could he no sympathy afford,  
Derived from earth or heaven,  
To hearts so oft by hope betrayed;  
Their very wishes wanted aid  
Which here was freely given?

Where, for the love-lorn maiden's wound,  
Will now so readily be found  
A balm of expectation?

Anxious for far-off children, where  
Shall mothers breathe a like sweet air  
Of home-felt consolation?

And not unfelt will prove the loss  
'Mid trivial care and petty cross  
And each day's shallow grief;  
Though the most easily beguiled  
Were oft among the first that smiled  
At their own fond belief.

If still the reckless change we mourn,  
A reconciling thought may turn  
To harm that might lurk here,  
Ere judgment prompted from within  
Fit aims, with courage to begin,  
And strength to persevere.

Not Fortune's slave is Man: our state  
Enjoins, while firm resolves await  
On wishes just and wise.  
That strenuous action follow both,  
And life be one perpetual growth  
Of heaven-ward enterprise.

So taught, so trained, we boldly face  
All accidents of time and place;  
Whatever props may fail,  
Trust in that sovereign law can spread  
New glory o'er the mountain's head,  
Fresh beauty through the vale.

That truth informing mind and heart,  
The simplest cottager may part,  
Ungrieved, with charm and spell;  
And yet, lost Wishing-gate, to thee  
The voice of grateful memory  
Shall bid a kind farewell! <sup>1</sup> 1828.

### A JEWISH FAMILY

IN A SMALL VALLEY OPPOSITE ST. GOAR,  
UPON THE RHINE

Coleridge, my daughter, and I, in 1828, passed a fortnight upon the banks of the Rhine, principally under the hospitable roof of Mr. Aders of Gotesburg, but two days of the time we spent at St. Goar in rambles among the neighbouring valleys. It was at St. Goar that I saw the Jewish family here described. Though exceedingly poor, and in rags, they were not less beautiful than I have endeavoured to make them appear. We

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

had taken a little dinner with us in a basket, and invited them to partake of it, which the mother refused to do, both for herself and children, saying it was with them a fast-day; adding diffidently, that whether such observances were right or wrong, she felt it her duty to keep them strictly. The Jews, who are numerous on this part of the Rhine, greatly surpass the German peasantry in the beauty of their features and in the intelligence of their countenances. But the lower classes of the German peasantry have, here at least, the air of people grievously oppressed. Nursing mothers, at the age of seven or eight and twenty often look haggard and far more decayed and withered than women of Cumberland and Westmoreland twice their age. This comes from being underfed and overworked in their vineyards in a hot and glaring sun.

GENIUS of Raphael! if thy wings  
Might bear thee to this glen,  
With faithful memory left of things  
To pencil dear and pen,  
Thou would'st forego the neighbouring  
Rhine,  
And all his majesty—  
A studious forehead to incline  
O'er this poor family.

The Mother—her thou must have seen,  
In spirit, ere she came  
To dwell these rifted rocks between,  
Or found on earth a name;  
An image, too, of that sweet Boy,  
Thy inspirations give—  
Of playfulness, and love, and joy,  
Predestined here to live.

Downcast, or shooting glances far,  
How beautiful his eyes,  
That blend the nature of the star  
With that of summer skies!  
I speak as if of sense beguiled;  
Uncounted months are gone,  
Yet am I with the Jewish Child,  
That exquisite Saint John.

I see the dark-brown curls, the brow,  
The smooth transparent skin,  
Refined, as with intent to show  
The holiness within;  
The grace of parting Infancy  
By blushes yet untamed;  
Age faithful to the mother's knee,  
Nor of her arms ashamed.

Two lovely Sisters, still and sweet  
As flowers, stand side by side;  
Their soul-subduing looks might cheat  
The Christian of his pride:  
Such beauty hath the Eternal poured  
Upon them not forlorn,  
Though of a lineage once abhorred,  
Nor yet redeemed from scorn.

Mysterious safeguard, that, in spite  
Of poverty and wrong,  
Doth here preserve a living light,  
From Hebrew fountains sprung;  
That gives this ragged group to cast  
Around the dell a gleam  
Of Palestine, of glory past,  
And proud Jerusalem! 1828.

## THE GLEANER

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE

This poem was first printed in the Annual called the *Keepsake*: The painter's name I am not sure of, but I think it was Holmes.

THAT happy gleam of vernal eyes,  
Those locks from summer's golden skies,  
That o'er thy brow are shed;  
That cheek—a kindling of the morn,  
That lip—a rose-bud from the thorn,  
I saw; and Fancy sped  
To scenes Arcadian, whispering, through  
soft air,  
Of bliss that grows without a care,  
And happiness that never flies—  
(How can it where love never dies?)  
Whispering of promise, where no blight  
Can reach the innocent delight;  
Where pity, to the mind conveyed  
In pleasure, is the darkest shade  
That Time, unwrinkled grandsire, flings  
From his smoothly gliding wings.  
What mortal form, what earthly face  
Inspired the pencil, lines to trace,  
And mingle colours, that should breed  
Such rapture, nor want power to feed;  
For had thy charge been idle flowers,  
Fair Damsel! o'er my captive mind,  
To truth and sober reason blind,  
'Mid that soft air, those long-lost bowers,  
The sweet illusion might have hung, for  
hours.

Thanks to this tell-tale sheaf of corn,  
That touchingly bespeaks thee born

Life's daily tasks with them to share  
 Who, whether from their lowly bed  
 They rise, or rest the weary head,  
 Ponder the blessing they entreat  
 From Heaven, and *feel* what they repeat,  
 While they give utterance to the prayer  
 That asks for daily bread. 1828.

## ON THE POWER OF SOUND

Written at Rydal Mount. I have often regretted that my tour in Ireland, chiefly performed in the short days of October in a Carriage-and-four (I was with Mr. Marshall), supplied my memory with so few images that were new, and with so little motive to write. The lines however in this poem, "Thou too be heard, lone eagle!" were suggested near the Giant's Causeway, or rather at the promontory of Fairhead, where a pair of eagles wheeled above our heads and darted off as if to hide themselves in a blaze of sky made by the setting sun.

## ARGUMENT

The Ear addressed, as occupied by a spiritual functionary, in communion with sounds, individual, or combined in studied harmony—Sources and effects of those sounds (to the close of 6th Stanza)—The power of music, whence proceeding, exemplified in the idiot—Origin of music, and its effect in early ages—How produced (to the middle of 10th Stanza)—The mind recalled to sounds acting casually and severally—Wish uttered (11th Stanza) that these could be united into a scheme or system for moral interests and intellectual contemplation—(Stanza 12th) The Pythagorean theory of numbers and music, with their supposed power over the motions of the universe—Imaginations consonant with such a theory—Wish expressed (in 11th Stanza) realised, in some degree, by the representation of all sounds under the form of thanksgiving to the Creator—(Last Stanza) the destruction of earth and the planetary system—The survival of audible harmony, and its support in the Divine Nature, as revealed in Holy Writ.

## I

THY functions are ethereal,  
 As if within thee dwelt a glancing mind,  
 Organ of vision! And a Spirit ærial  
 Informs the cell of Hearing, dark and blind;  
 Intricate labyrinth, more dread for thought

To enter than oracular cave;  
 Strict passage, through which sighs are  
 brought,  
 And whispers for the heart, their slave;  
 And shrieks, that revel in abuse  
 Of shivering flesh; and warbled air,  
 Whose piercing sweetness can unloose  
 The chains of frenzy, or entice a smile  
 Into the ambush of despair;  
 Hosannas pealing down the long-drawn  
 aisle,  
 And requiems answered by the pulse that  
 beats  
 Devoutly, in life's last retreats!

## II

The headlong streams and fountains  
 Serve Thee, invisible Spirit, with untired  
 powers;  
 Cheering the wakeful tent on Syrian mount-  
 ains,  
 They lull perchance ten thousand thousand  
 flowers.  
*That* roar, the prowling lion's *Here I am*,  
 How fearful to the desert wide!  
 That bleat, how tender! of the dam  
 Calling a straggler to her side.  
 Shout, cuckoo!—let the vernal soul  
 Go with thee to the frozen zone;  
 Toll from thy loftiest perch, lone bell-bird,  
 toll!  
 At the still hour to Mercy dear,  
 Mercy from her twilight throne  
 Listening to nun's faint throb of holy fear,  
 To sailor's prayer breathed from a darken-  
 ing sea,  
 Or widow's cottage-lullaby.

## III

Ye Voices, and ye Shadows  
 And Images of voice—to hound and horn  
 From rocky steep and rock-bestudded  
 meadows  
 Flung back, and, in the sky's blue caves,  
 reborn—  
 On with your pastime! till the church-tower  
 bells  
 A greeting give of measured glee;  
 And milder echoes from their cells  
 Repeat the bridal symphony.  
 Then, or far earlier, let us rove  
 Where mists are breaking up or gone,  
 And from aloft look down into a cove



Besprinkled with a careless quire,  
Happy milk-maids, one by one  
Scattering a ditty each to her desire,  
A liquid concert matchless by nice Art,  
A stream as if from one full heart.

## IV

Blest be the song that brightens  
The blind man's gloom, exalts the veteran's  
mirth;  
Unscorned the peasant's whistling breath,  
that lightens  
His duteous toil of furrowing the green  
earth.  
For the tired slave, Song lifts the languid  
oar,  
And bids it aptly fall, with chime  
That beautifies the fairest shore,  
And mitigates the harshest clime.  
Yon pilgrims see—in lagging file  
They move; but soon the appointed way  
A choral *Ave Marie* shall beguile,  
And to their hope the distant shrine  
Glisten with a livelier ray:  
Nor friendless he, the prisoner of the mine,  
Who from the well-spring of his own clear  
breast  
Can draw, and sing his griefs to rest.

## V

When civic renovation  
Dawns on a kingdom, and for needful haste  
Best eloquence avails not, Inspiration  
Mounts with a tune, that travels like a blast  
Piping through cave and battlemented tower;  
Then starts the sluggard, pleased to meet  
That voice of Freedom, in its power  
Of promises, shrill, wild, and sweet!  
Who, from a martial *pageant*, spreads  
Incitements of a battle-day,  
Thrilling the unweaponed crowd with  
plumeless heads?—  
Even She whose Lydian airs inspire  
Peaceful striving, gentle play  
Of timid hope and innocent desire  
Shot from the dancing Graces, as they move  
Fanned by the plausive wings of Love.

## VI

How oft along thy mazes,  
Regent of sound, have dangerous Passions  
trod!

O Thou, through whom the temple rings  
with praises,  
And blackening clouds in thunder speak of  
God,

Betray not by the cozenage of sense  
Thy votaries, wooingly resigned  
To a voluptuous influence  
That taints the purer, better, mind;  
But lead sick Fancy to a harp  
That hath in noble tasks been tried;  
And, if the virtuous feel a pang too sharp,  
Soothe it into patience,—stay  
The uplifted arm of Suicide;  
And let some mood of thine in firm array  
Knit every thought the impending issue  
needs,  
Ere martyr burns, or patriot bleeds!

## VII

As Conscience, to the centre  
Of being, smites with irresistible pain  
So shall a solemn cadence, if it enter  
The mouldy vaults of the dull idiot's brain,  
Transmute him to a wretch from quiet  
hurled—

Convulsed as by a jarring din;  
And then aghast, as at the world  
Of reason partially let in  
By concords winding with a sway  
Terrible for sense and soul!  
Or, awed he weeps, struggling to quell  
dismay.

Point not these mysteries to an Art  
Lodged above the starry pole;  
Pure modulations flowing from the heart  
Of divine Love, where Wisdom, Beauty,  
Truth  
With Order dwell, in endless youth?

## VIII

Oblivion may not cover  
All treasures hoarded by the miser, Time,  
Orphean Insight! truth's undaunted lover,  
To the first leagues of tutored passion climb,  
When Music deigned within this grosser  
sphere

Her subtle essence to enfold,  
And voice and shell drew forth a tear  
Softer than Nature's self could mould.  
Yet *strenuous* was the infant Age:  
Art, daring because souls could feel,  
Stirred nowhere but an urgent equipage  
Of rapt imagination sped her march

Through the realms of woe and weal;  
 Hell to the lyre bowed low; the upper arch  
 Rejoiced that clamorous spell and magic  
     verse  
 Her wan disasters could disperse.

## IX

The GIFT to king Amphion  
 That walled a city with its melody  
 Was for belief no dream :—thy skill, Arion !  
 Could humanise the creatures of the sea,  
 Where men were monsters. A last grace  
     he craves,  
 Leave for one chant ;—the dulcet sound  
 Steals from the deck o'er willing waves,  
 And listening dolphins gather round.  
 Self-cast, as with a desperate course,  
 'Mid that strange audience, he bestrides  
 A proud One docile as a managed horse;  
 And singing, while the accordant hand  
 Sweeps his harp, the Master rides;  
 So shall he touch at length a friendly strand,  
 And he, with his preserver, shine star-bright  
 In memory, through silent night.

## X

The pipe of Pan, to shepherds  
 Couched in the shadow of Mænalian pines,  
 Was passing sweet; the eyeballs of the  
     leopards,  
 That in high triumph drew the Lord of  
     vines,  
 How did they sparkle to the cymbal's clang !  
 While Fauns and Satyrs beat the ground  
 In cadence,—and Silenus swang  
 This way and that, with wild-flowers  
     crowned.  
 To life, to *life* give back thine ear:  
 Ye who are longing to be rid  
 Of fable, though to truth subservient, hear  
 The little sprinkling of cold earth that fell  
 Echoed from the coffin-lid;  
 The convict's summons in the steeple's  
     knell;  
 "The vain distress-gun," from a leeward  
     shore,  
 Repeated—heard, and heard no more !

## XI

For terror, joy, or pity,  
 Vast is the compass and the swell of notes:

From the babe's first cry to voice of regal  
     city,  
 Rolling a solemn sea-like bass, that floats  
 Far as the woodlands—with the trill to blend  
 Of that shy songstress, whose love-tale  
 Might tempt an angel to descend,  
 While hovering o'er the moonlight vale.  
 Ye wandering Utterances, has earth no  
     scheme,  
 No scale of moral music—to unite  
 Powers that survive but in the faintest  
     dream  
 Of memory?—O that ye might stoop to  
     bear  
 Chains, such precious chains of sight  
 As laboured minstrelsies through ages wear !  
 O for a balance fit the truth to tell  
 Of the Unsubstantial, pondered well !

## XII

By one pervading spirit  
 Of tones and numbers all things are con-  
     trolled,  
 As sages taught, where faith was found to  
     merit  
 Initiation in that mystery old.  
 The heavens, whose aspect makes our minds  
     as still  
 As they themselves appear to be,  
 Innumerable voices fill  
 With everlasting harmony;  
 The towering headlands, crowned with  
     mist,  
 Their feet among the billows, know  
 That Ocean is a mighty harmonist;  
 Thy pinions, universal Air,  
 Ever waving to and-fro,  
 Are delegates of harmony, and bear  
 Strains that support the Seasons in their  
     round;  
 Stern Winter loves a dirge-like sound.

## XIII

Break forth into thanksgiving,  
 Ye banded instruments of wind and chords  
 Unite, to magnify the Ever-living,  
 Your inarticulate notes with the voice of  
     words !  
 Nor hushed be service from the lowing  
     mead,  
 Nor mute the forest hum of noon;  
 Thou too be heard, lone eagle ! freed

From snowy peak and cloud, attune  
Thy hungry barkings to the hymn  
Of joy, that from her utmost walls  
The six-days' Work, by flaming Seraphim  
Transmits to Heaven! As Deep to Deep  
Shouting through one valley calls,  
All worlds, all natures, mood and measure  
keep

For praise and ceaseless gratulation, poured  
Into the ear of God, their Lord!

## XIV

A Voice to Light gave Being;  
To Time, and Man, his earth-born  
chronicler;

A Voice shall finish doubt and dim foreseeing,  
And sweep away life's visionary stir;  
The trumpet (we, intoxicate with pride,  
Arm at its blast for deadly wars)  
To archangelic lips applied,  
The grave shall open, quench the stars.  
O Silence! are Man's noisy years  
No more than moments of thy life?  
Is Harmony, blest queen of smiles and tears,  
With her smooth tones and discords just,  
Tempered into rapturous strife,  
Thy destined bond-slave? No! though  
earth be dust

And vanish, though the heavens dissolve,  
her stay

Is in the WORD, that shall not pass away.  
1828.

## INCIDENT AT BRUGÈS

This occurred at Brugès in 1828. Mr. Cole-  
ridge, my Daughter, and I made a tour together  
in Flanders, upon the Rhine, and returned by  
Holland. Dora and I, while taking a walk along  
a retired part of the town, heard the voice as here  
described, and were afterwards informed it was a  
Convent in which were many English. We were  
both much touched, I might say affected, and  
Dora moved as appears in the verses.

IN Brugès town is many a street  
Whence busy life hath fled;  
Where, without hurry, noiseless feet  
The grass-grown pavement tread.  
There heard we, halting in the shade  
Flung from a Convent-tower,  
A harp that tuneful prelude made  
To a voice of thrilling power.

The measure, simple truth to tell,  
Was fit for some gay throng;  
Though from the same grim turret fell  
The shadow and the song.  
When silent were both voice and chords,  
The strain seemed doubly dear,  
Yet sad as sweet,—for *English* words  
Had fallen upon the ear.

It was a breezy hour of eve;  
And pinnacle and spire  
Quivered and seemed almost to heave,  
Clothed with innocuous fire;  
But, where we stood, the setting sun  
Showed little of his state;  
And, if the glory reached the Nun,  
'Twas through an iron grate.

Not always is the heart unwise,  
Nor pity idly born,  
If even a passing Stranger sighs  
For them who do not mourn.  
Sad is thy doom, self-solaced dove,  
Captive, whoe'er thou be!  
Oh! what is beauty, what is love,  
And opening life to thee?

Such feeling pressed upon my soul,  
A feeling sanctified  
By one soft trickling tear that stole  
From the Maiden at my side;  
Less tribute could she pay than this,  
Borne gaily o'er the sea,  
Fresh from the beauty and the bliss  
Of English liberty? 1828.

GOLD AND SILVER FISHES IN  
A VASE

They were a present from Miss Jewsbury, of  
whom mention is made in the note at the end of  
the next poem. The fish were healthy to all ap-  
pearance in their confinement for a long time, but  
at last, for some cause we could not make out,  
they languished, and, one of them being all but  
dead, they were taken to the pool under the old  
Pollard-oak. The apparently dying one lay on  
its side unable to move. I used to watch it, and  
about the tenth day it began to right itself, and  
in a few days more was able to swim about with  
its companions. For many months they con-  
tinued to prosper in their new place of abode;  
but one night by an unusually great flood they

were swept out of the pool, and perished to our great regret.

THE soaring lark is blest as proud  
When at heaven's gate she sings;  
The roving bee proclaims aloud  
Her flight by vocal wings;  
While Ye, in lasting durance pent,  
Your silent lives employ  
For something more than dull content,  
Though haply less than joy.

Yet might your glassy prison seem  
A place where joy is known,  
Where golden flash and silver gleam  
Have meanings of their own;  
While, high and low, and all about,  
Your motions, glittering Elves!  
Ye weave—no danger from without,  
And peace among yourselves.

Type of a sunny human breast  
Is your transparent cell;  
Where Fear is but a transient guest,  
No sullen Humours dwell;  
Where, sensitive of every ray  
That smites this tiny sea,  
Your scaly panoplies repay  
The loan with usury.

How beautiful!—Yet none knows why  
This ever-graceful change,  
Renewed—renewed incessantly—  
Within your quiet range.  
Is it that ye with conscious skill  
For mutual pleasure glide;  
And sometimes, not without your will,  
Are dwarfed, or magnified?

Fays, Genii of gigantic size!  
And now, in twilight dim,  
Clustering like constellated eyes,  
In wings of Cherubim,  
When the fierce orbs abate their glare;—  
Whate'er your forms express,  
Whate'er ye seem, whate'er ye are—  
All leads to gentleness.

Cold though your nature be, 'tis pure,  
Your birthright is a fence  
From all that haughtier kinds endure  
Through tyranny of sense.  
Ah! not alone by colours bright  
Are Ye to heaven allied,

When, like essential Forms of light,  
Ye mingle, or divide.

For day-dreams soft as e'er beguiled  
Day-thoughts while limbs repose;  
For moonlight fascinations mild,  
Your gift, ere shutters close—  
Accept, mute Captives! thanks and praise;  
And may this tribute prove  
That gentle admirations raise  
Delight resembling love. 1829.

## LIBERTY

(SEQUEL TO THE ABOVE)

ADDRESSED TO A FRIEND; THE GOLD AND SILVER  
FISHES HAVING BEEN REMOVED TO A POOL IN  
THE PLEASURE-GROUND OF RYDAL MOUNT.

"The liberty of a people consists in being governed by laws which they have made for themselves, under whatever form it be of government. The liberty of a private man, in being master of his own time and actions, as far as may consist with the laws of God and of his country. Of this latter we are here to discourse."  
—COWLEY.

THOSE breathing Tokens of your kind  
regard,

(Suspect not, Anna, that their fate is hard;  
Not soon does aught to which mild fancies  
cling

In lonely spots, become a slighted thing;) Those silent Inmates now no longer share,  
Nor do they need, our hospitable care,  
Removed in kindness from their glassy Cell  
To the fresh waters of a living Well—

An elfin pool so sheltered that its rest  
No winds disturb; the mirror of whose  
breast

Is smooth as clear, save where with dimples  
small

A fly may settle, or a blossom fall.

— *There* swims, of blazing sun and beating  
shower

Fearless (but how obscured!) the golden  
Power,

That from his bauble prison used to cast  
Gleams by the richest jewel unsurpass;  
And near him, darkling like a sullen Gnome,  
The silver Tenant of the crystal dome;  
Dissevered both from all the mysteries

Of hue and altering shape that charmed all eyes.

Alas ! they pined, they languished while they shone ;

And, if not so, what matters beauty gone  
And admiration lost, by change of place  
That brings to the inward creature no disgrace ?

But if the change restore his birthright, then,

Whate'er the difference, boundless is the gain.

Who can divine what impulses from God  
Reach the caged lark, within a town-abode,  
From his poor inch or two of daisied sod ?  
O yield him back his privilege !—No sea  
Swells like the bosom of a man set free ;  
A wilderness is rich with liberty.

Roll on, ye spouting whales, who die or keep

Your independence in the fathomless Deep !  
Spread, tiny nautilus, the living sail ;  
Dive, at thy choice, or brave the freshening gale !

If unproved the ambitious eagle mount  
Sunward to seek the daylight in its fount,  
Bays, gulfs, and ocean's Indian width, shall be,

Till the world perishes, a field for thee !

While musing here I sit in shadow cool,  
And watch these mute Companions, in the pool,

(Among reflected boughs of leafy trees)  
By glimpses caught—disporting at their ease,

Enlivened, braced, by hardy luxuries,  
I ask what warrant fixed them (like a spell  
Of witchcraft fixed them) in the crystal cell ;  
To wheel with languid motion round and round,

Beautiful, yet in mournful durance bound.  
Their peace, perhaps, our lightest footfall marred ;

On their quick sense our sweetest music jarred ;

And whither could they dart, if seized with fear ?

No sheltering stone, no tangled root was near.

When fire or taper ceased to cheer the room,  
They wore away the night in starless gloom ;  
And, when the sun first dawned upon the streams,

How faint their portion of his vital beams !

Thus, and unable to complain, they fared,  
While not one joy of ours by them was shared.

Is there a cherished bird (I venture now  
To snatch a sprig from Chaucer's reverend brow)—

Is there a brilliant fondling of the cage,  
Though sure of plaudits on his costly stage,  
Though fed with dainties from the snow-white hand

Of a kind mistress, fairest of the land,  
But gladly would escape ; and, if need were,  
Scatter the colours from the plumes that bear

The emancipated captive through blithe air  
Into strange woods, where he at large may live

On best or worst which they and Nature give ?

The beetle loves his unpretending track,  
The snail the house he carries on his back ;  
The far-fetched worm with pleasure would disown

The bed we give him, though of softest down ;

A noble instinct ; in all kinds the same,  
All ranks ! What Sovereign, worthy of the name,

If doomed to breathe against his lawful will  
An element that flatters him—to kill,  
But would rejoice to barter outward show  
For the least boon that freedom can bestow ?

But most the Bard is true to inborn right,  
Lark of the dawn, and Philomel of night,  
Exults in freedom, can with rapture vouch  
For the dear blessings of a lowly couch,  
A natural meal—days, months, from Nature's hand ;

Time, place, and business, all at his command !—

Who bends to happier duties, who more wise

Than the industrious Poet, taught to prize,  
Above all grandeur, a pure life uncrossed  
By cares in which simplicity is lost ?

That life—the flowery path that winds by stealth—

Which Horace needed for his spirit's health :  
Sighed for, in heart and genius, overcome  
By noise and strife, and questions wearisome,  
And the vain splendours of Imperial Rome ?—

Let easy mirth his social hours inspire,  
And fiction animate his sportive lyre,

Attuned to verse that, crowning light Dis-  
tress  
With garlands, cheats her into happiness ;  
Give *me* the humblest note of those sad  
strains  
Drawn forth by pressure of his gilded chains,  
As a chance-sunbeam from his memory  
fell

Upon the Sabine farm he loved so well ;  
Or when the prattle of Blandusia's spring  
Haunted his ear—he only listening—  
He, proud to please, above all rivals, fit  
To win the palm of gaiety and wit ;  
He, doubt not, with involuntary dread,  
Shrinking from each new favour to be  
shed,

By the world's Ruler, on his honoured head !

In a deep vision's intellectual scene,  
Such earnest longings and regrets as keen  
Depressed the melancholy Cowley, laid  
Under a fancied yew-tree's luckless shade ;  
A doleful bower for penitential song,  
Where Man and Muse complained of  
mutual wrong ;

While Cam's ideal current glided by,  
And antique towers nodded their foreheads  
high,

Citadels dear to studious privacy,  
But Fortune, who had long been used to  
sport

With this tried Servant of a thankless Court,  
Relenting met his wishes ; and to you  
The remnant of his days at least was true ;  
You, whom, though long deserted, he loved  
best ;

You, Muses, books, fields, liberty, and rest !  
Far happier they who, fixing hope and  
aim

On the humanities of peaceful fame,  
Enter betimes with more than martial fire  
The generous course, aspire, and still aspire ;  
Upheld by warnings heeded not too late  
Stifle the contradictions of their fate,  
And to one purpose cleave, their Being's  
godlike mate !

Thus, gifted Friend, but with the placid  
brow

That woman ne'er should forfeit, keep *thy*  
vow ;

With modest scorn reject whate'er would  
blind

The ethereal eyesight, cramp the winged  
mind !

Then, with a blessing granted from above

To every act, word, thought, and look of  
love,

Life's book for Thee may lie unclosed, till  
age

Shall with a thankful tear bedrop its latest  
page.<sup>1</sup> 1829.

## HUMANITY

These verses and those entitled "Liberty"  
were composed as one piece, which Mrs. Words-  
worth complained of as unwieldy and ill-propor-  
tioned ; and accordingly it was divided into two  
on her judicious recommendation.

The Rocking-stones, alluded to in the beginning  
of the following verses, are supposed to have been  
used, by our British ancestors, both for judicial  
and religious purposes. Such stones are not  
uncommonly found, at this day, both in Great  
Britain and in Ireland.

WHAT though the Accused, upon his own  
appeal

To righteous Gods when man has ceased to  
feel,

Or at a doubting Judge's stern command,  
Before the STONE OF POWER no longer  
stand—

To take his sentence from the balanced  
Block,

As, at his touch, it rocks, or seems to rock ;  
Though, in the depths of sunless groves,  
no more

<sup>1</sup> There is now, alas ! no possibility of the  
anticipation, with which the above Epistle con-  
cludes, being realised : nor were the verses ever  
seen by the Individual for whom they were in-  
tended. She accompanied her husband, the Rev.  
Wm. Fletcher, to India, and died of cholera, at  
the age of thirty-two or thirty-three years, on her  
way from Shalapore to Bombay, deeply lamented  
by all who knew her.

Her enthusiasm was ardent, her piety stead-  
fast ; and her great talents would have enabled  
her to be eminently useful in the difficult path of  
life to which she had been called. The opinion  
she entertained of her own performances, given  
to the world under her maiden name, Jewsbury,  
was modest and humble, and, indeed, far below  
their merits ; as is often the case with those who  
are making trial of their powers, with a hope to  
discover what they are best fitted for. In one  
quality, viz. quickness in the motions of her mind,  
she had, within the range of the Author's acquaint-  
ance, no equal.

The Druid-priest the hallowed Oak adore ;  
Yet, for the Initiate, rocks and whispering  
trees

Do still perform mysterious offices !  
And functions dwell in beast and bird that  
sway

The reasoning mind, or with the fancy play,  
Inviting, at all seasons, ears and eyes  
To watch for undelusive auguries :—  
Not uninspired appear their simplest ways ;  
Their voices mount symbolical of praise—  
To mix with hymns that Spirits make and  
hear ;

And to fallen man their innocence is dear.  
Enraptured Art draws from those sacred  
springs

Streams that reflect the poetry of things !  
Where christian Martyrs stand in hues  
portrayed,

That, might a wish avail, would never fade ;  
Borne in their hands the lily and the palma  
Shed round the altar a celestial calm ;  
There, too, behold the lamb and guileless  
dove

Prest in the tenderness of virgin love  
To saintly bosoms !—Glorious is the blend-  
ing

Of right affections climbing or descending  
Along a scale of light and life, with cares  
Alternate ; carrying holy thoughts and  
prayers

Up to the sovereign seat of the Most High ;  
Descending to the worm in charity ;<sup>1</sup>  
Like those good Angels whom a dream of  
night

Gave, in the field of Luz, to Jacob's sight  
All, while *he* slept, treading the pendent  
stairs

Earthward or heavenward, radiant mes-  
sengers,

That, with a perfect will in one accord  
Of strict obedience, serve the Almighty  
Lord ;

And with untired humility forbore  
To speed their errand by the wings they  
wore,

What a fair world were ours for verse to  
paint,

If Power could live at ease with self-re-  
straint !

Opinion bow before the naked sense  
Of the great Vision,—faith in Providence ;  
Merciful over all his creatures, just

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

To the least particle of sentient dust :  
But, fixing by immutable decrees,  
Seedtime and harvest for his purposes !  
Then would be closed the restless oblique  
eye

That looks for evil like a treacherous spy ;  
Disputes would then relax, like stormy  
winds

That into breezes sink ; impetuous minds  
By discipline endeavour to grow meek  
As Truth herself, whom they profess to seek.  
Then Genius, shunning fellowship with  
Pride,

Would braid his golden locks at Wisdom's  
side ;

Love ebb and flow untroubled by caprice ;  
And not alone *harsh* tyranny would cease,  
But unoffending creatures find release  
From qualified oppression, whose defence  
Rests on a hollow plea of recompence ;  
Thought - tempered wrongs, for each  
humane respect

Of worse to bear, or deadlier in effect,  
Witness those glances of indignant scorn  
From some high-minded Slave, impelled to  
spurn

The kindness that would make him less  
forlorn ;

Or, if the soul to bondage be subdued,  
His look of pitiable gratitude !

Alas for thee, bright Galaxy of Isles,  
Whose day departs in pomp, returns with  
smiles—

To greet the flowers and fruitage of a land,  
As the sun mounts, by sea-born breezes  
fanned ;

A land whose azure mountain-tops are seats  
For Gods in council, whose green vales,  
retreats

Fit for the shades of heroes, mingling there  
To breathe Elysian peace in upper air.

Though cold as winter, gloomy as the  
grave,

Stone-walls a prisoner make, but not a  
slave.

Shall man assume a property in man ?  
Lay on the moral will a withering ban ?

Shame that our laws at distance still protect  
Enormities, which they at home reject !

“ Slaves cannot breathe in England ”—yet  
that boast

Is but a mockery ! when from coast to coast,  
Though *fettered* slave be none, her floors  
and soil

Groan underneath a weight of slavish toil,  
For the poor Many, measured out by rules  
Fetched with cupidity from heartless  
schools,

That to an Idol, falsely called "the Wealth  
Of Nations," sacrifice a People's health,  
Body and mind and soul; a thirst so keen  
Is ever urging on the vast machine  
Of sleepless Labour, 'mid whose dizzy wheels  
The Power least prized is that which thinks  
and feels.

Then, for the pastimes of this delicate age,  
And all the heavy or light vassalage  
Which for their sakes we fasten, as may suit  
Our varying moods, on human kind or  
brute,

"Twere well in little, as in great, to pause,  
Lest Fancy trifle with eternal laws.  
Not from his fellows only man may learn  
Rights to compare and duties to discern !  
All creatures and all objects, in degree,  
Are friends and patrons of humanity.  
There are to whom the garden, grove, and  
field,

Perpetual lessons of forbearance yield ;  
Who would not lightly violate the grace  
The lowliest flower possesses in its place ;  
Nor shorten the sweet life, too fugitive,  
Which nothing less than Infinite Power  
could give. 1829.

### "THIS LAWN, A CARPET ALL ALIVE"

This Lawn is the sloping one approaching the kitchen-garden, and was made out of it. Hundreds of times have I watched the dancing of shadows amid a press of sunshine, and other beautiful appearances of light and shade, flowers and shrubs. What a contrast between this and the cabbages and onions and carrots that used to grow there on a piece of ugly-shaped unsightly ground ! No reflection, however, either upon cabbages or onions ; the latter we know were worshipped by the Egyptians, and he must have a poor eye for beauty who has not observed how much of it there is in the form and colour which cabbages and plants of that genus exhibit through the various stages of their growth and decay. A richer display of colour in vegetable nature can scarcely be conceived than Coleridge, my Sister, and I saw in a bed of potato-plants in blossom near a hut upon the moor between Inversneyd and Loch Katrine. These blossoms were of such extraordinary beauty and richness that no one

could have passed them without notice. But the sense must be cultivated through the mind before we can perceive these inexhaustible treasures of Nature, for such they really are, without the least necessary reference to the utility of her productions, or even to the laws whereupon, as we learn by research, they are dependent. Some are of opinion that the habit of analysing, decomposing, and anatomising is inevitably unfavourable to the perception of beauty. People are led into this mistake by overlooking the fact that such processes being to a certain extent within the reach of a limited intellect, we are apt to ascribe to them that insensibility of which they are in truth the effect and not the cause. Admiration and love, to which all knowledge truly vital must tend, are felt by men of real genius in proportion as their discoveries in natural Philosophy are enlarged ; and the beauty in form of a plant or an animal is not made less but more apparent as a whole by more accurate insight into its constituent properties and powers. A *Savant* who is not also a poet in soul and a religionist in heart is a feeble and unhappy creature.

THIS LAWN, a carpet all alive  
With shadows flung from leaves—to strive  
In dance, amid a press  
Of sunshine, an apt emblem yields  
Of Worldlings revelling in the fields  
Of strenuous idleness ;

Less quick the stir when tide and breeze  
Encounter, and to narrow seas  
Forbid a moment's rest ;  
The medley less when boreal Lights  
Glance to and fro, like aery Sprites  
To feats of arms address !

Yet, spite of all this eager strife,  
This ceaseless play, the genuine life  
That serves the stedfast hours,  
Is in the grass beneath, that grows  
Unheeded, and the mute repose  
Of sweetly-breathing flowers. 1829.

### THOUGHT ON THE SEASONS

Written at Rydal Mount.

FLATTERED with promise of escape  
From every hurtful blast,  
Spring takes, O sprightly May ! thy shape,  
Her loveliest and her last.



Less fair is summer riding high  
 In fierce solstitial power,  
 Less fair than when a lenient sky  
 Brings on her parting hour.

When earth repays with golden sheaves  
 The labours of the plough,  
 And ripening fruits and forest leaves  
 All brighten on the bough;

What pensive beauty autumn shows,  
 Before she hears the sound  
 Of winter rushing in, to close  
 The emblematic round !

Such be our Spring, our Summer such ;  
 So may our Autumn blend  
 With hoary Winter, and Life touch,  
 Through heaven-born hope, her end !  
 1829.

#### A GRAVESTONE UPON THE FLOOR IN THE CLOISTERS OF WOR- CESTER CATHEDRAL

"*Miserrimus*." Many conjectures have been formed as to the person who lies under this stone. Nothing appears to be known for a certainty. Query—The Rev. Mr. Morris, a nonconformist, a sufferer for conscience-sake ; a worthy man who, having been deprived of his benefice after the accession of William III., lived to an old age in extreme destitution, on the alms of charitable Jacobites.

"*MISERRIMUS*," and neither name nor date,  
 Prayer, text, or symbol, graven upon the  
 stone ;

Nought but that word assigned to the un-  
 known,

That solitary word—to separate  
 From all, and cast a cloud around the fate  
 Of him who lies beneath. Most wretched  
 one,

*Who* chose his epitaph ?—Himself alone  
 Could thus have dared the grave to agitate,  
 And claim, among the dead, this awful  
 crown ;

Nor doubt that He marked also for his own  
 Close to these cloistral steps a burial-place,  
 That every foot might fall with heavier tread,  
 Trampling upon his vileness. Stranger, pass  
 Softly !—To save the contrite, Jesus bled.  
 1829.

#### A TRADITION OF OKER HILL IN DARLEY DALE, DERBYSHIRE

This pleasing tradition was told me by the coachman at whose side I sate while he drove down the dale, he pointing to the trees on the hill as he related the story.

'Tis said that to the brow of yon fair hill  
 Two Brothers clomb, and, turning face  
 from face,  
 Nor one look more exchanging, grief to still  
 Or feed, each planted on that lofty place  
 A chosen Tree ; then, eager to fulfil  
 Their courses, like two new-born rivers,  
 they

In opposite directions urged their way  
 Down from the far-seen mount. No blast  
 might kill

Or blight that fond memorial ;—the trees  
 grew,  
 And now entwine their arms ; but ne'er  
 again

Embraced those Brothers upon earth's wide  
 plain ;

Nor aught of mutual joy or sorrow knew  
 Until their spirits mingled in the sea  
 That to itself takes all, Eternity. 1829.

#### THE ARMENIAN LADY'S LOVE

Written at Rydal Mount.

The subject of the following poem is from the *Orlandus* of the author's friend, Kenelm Henry Digby : and the liberty is taken of inscribing it to him as an acknowledgment, however unworthy, of pleasure and instruction derived from his numerous and valuable writings, illustrative of the piety and chivalry of the olden time.

I

You have heard "a Spanish Lady  
 How she wooed an English man ;"<sup>1</sup>  
 Hear now of a fair Armenian,  
 Daughter of the proud Soldàn ;  
 How she loved a Christian slave, and told  
 her pain  
 By word, look, deed, with hope that he  
 might love again.

<sup>1</sup> See, in Percy's *Reliques*, that fine old ballad, "The Spanish Lady's Love ;" from which Poem the form of stanza, as suitable to dialogue, is adopted.

## II

"Pluck that rose, it moves my liking,"  
Said she, lifting up her veil;  
"Pluck it for me, gentle gardener,  
Ere it wither and grow pale."  
"Princess fair, I till the ground, but may  
not take  
From twig or bed an humbler flower, even  
for your sake!"

## III

"Grieved am I, submissive Christian!  
To behold thy captive state;  
Women, in your land, may pity  
(May they not?) the unfortunate."  
"Yes, kind Lady! otherwise man could  
not bear  
Life, which to every one that breathes is  
full of care."

## IV

"Worse than idle is compassion  
If it end in tears and sighs;  
Thee from bondage would I rescue  
And from vile indignities;  
Nurtured, as thy mien bespeaks, in high  
degree,  
Look up—and help a hand that longs to  
set thee free."

## V

"Lady! dread the wish, nor venture  
In such peril to engage;  
Think how it would stir against you  
Your most loving father's rage:  
Sad deliverance would it be, and yoked  
with shame,  
Should troubles overflow on her from whom  
it came."

## VI

"Generous Frank! the just in effort  
Are of inward peace secure:  
Hardships for the brave encountered,  
Even the feeblest may endure:  
If almighty grace through me thy chains  
unbind  
My father for slave's work may seek a slave  
in mind."

## VII

"Princess, at this burst of goodness,  
My long-frozen heart grows warm!"  
"Yet you make all courage fruitless,  
Me to save from chance of harm:  
Leadingsuch companion I that gilded dome,  
Yon minarets, would gladly leave for his  
worst home."

## VIII

"Feeling tunes your voice, fair Princess,  
And your brow is free from scorn,  
Else these words would come like  
mockery,  
Sharper than the pointed thorn."  
"Whence the undeserved mistrust? Too  
wide apart  
Our faith hath been,—O would that eyes  
could see the heart!"

## IX

"Tempt me not, I pray; my doom is  
These base implements to wield;  
Rusty lance, I ne'er shall grasp thee,  
Ne'er assoil my cobwebbed shield!  
Never see my native land, nor castle towers,  
Nor Her who thinking of me there counts  
widowed hours."

## X

"Prisoner! pardon youthful fancies;  
Wedded? If you *can*, say no!  
Blessed is and be your consort;  
Hopes I cherished—let them go!  
Handmaid's privilege would leave my  
purpose free,  
Without another link to my felicity."

## XI

"Wedded love with loyal Christians,  
Lady, is a mystery rare;  
Body, heart, and soul in union,  
Make one being of a pair."  
"Humble love in me would look for no  
return,  
Soft as a guiding star that cheers, but can-  
not burn."

## XII

"Gracious Allah! by such title  
Do I dare to thank the God,

Him who thus exalts thy spirit,  
 Flower of an unchristian sod !  
 Or hast thou put off wings which thou in  
 heaven dost wear ?  
 What have I seen, and heard, or dreamt ?  
 where am I ? where ?"

## XIII

Here broke off the dangerous converse :  
 Less impassioned words might tell  
 How the pair escaped together,  
 Tears not wanting, nor a knell  
 Of sorrow in her heart while through her  
 father's door,  
 And from her narrow world, she passed for  
 evermore.

## XIV

But affections higher, holier,  
 Urged her steps ; she shrunk from  
 trust  
 In a sensual creed that trampled  
 Woman's birthright into dust.  
 Little be the wonder then, the blame be  
 none,  
 If she, a timid Maid, hath put such bold-  
 ness on.

## XV

Judge both Fugitives with knowledge :  
 In those old romantic days  
 Mighty were the soul's commandments  
 To support, restrain, or raise.  
 Foes might hang upon their path, snakes  
 rustle near,  
 But nothing from their inward selves had  
 they to fear.

## XVI

Thought infirm ne'er came between  
 them,  
 Whether printing desert sands  
 With accordant steps, or gathering  
 Forest-fruit with social hands ;  
 Or whispering like two reeds that in the  
 cold moonbeam  
 Bend with the breeze their heads, beside a  
 crystal stream.

## XVII

On a friendly deck reposing  
 They at length for Venice steer ;

There, when they had closed their  
 voyage

One, who daily on the pier  
 Watched for tidings from the East, beheld  
 his Lord,  
 Fell down and clasped his knees for joy,  
 not uttering word.

## XVIII

Mutual was the sudden transport ;  
 Breathless questions followed fast,  
 Years contracting to a moment,  
 Each word greedier than the last :  
 " Hie thee to the Countess, friend ! return  
 with speed,  
 And of this Stranger speak by whom her  
 lord was freed.

## XIX

Say that I, who might have languished,  
 Drooped and pined till life was spent,  
 Now before the gates of Stolberg  
 My Deliverer would present  
 For a crowning recompence, the precious  
 grace  
 Of her who in my heart still holds her  
 ancient place.

## XX

Make it known that my Companion  
 Is of royal eastern blood,  
 Thirsting after all perfection,  
 Innocent, and meek, and good,  
 Though with misbelievers bred ; but that  
 dark night  
 Will holy Church disperse by means of  
 gospel-light."

## XXI

Swiftly went that grey-haired Servant,  
 Soon returned a trusty Page  
 Charged with greetings, benedictions,  
 Thanks and praises, each a gage  
 For a sunny thought to cheer the Stranger's  
 way,  
 Her virtuous scruples to remove, her fears  
 ally.

## XXII

And how blest the Reunited,  
 While beneath their castle-walls,  
 Runs a deafening noise of welcome !—  
 Blest, though every tear that falls

Doth in its silence of past sorrow tell,  
And makes a meeting seem most like a  
dear farewell.

## XXIII

Through a haze of human nature,  
Glorified by heavenly light,  
Looked the beautiful Deliverer  
On that overpowering sight,  
While across her virgin cheek pure blushes  
strayed,  
For every tender sacrifice her heart had  
made.

## XXIV

On the ground the weeping Countess  
Kneelt, and kissed the Stranger's hand;  
Act of soul-devoted homage,  
Pledge of an eternal band:  
Nor did aught of future days that kiss belie,  
Which, with a generous shout, the crowd  
did ratify.

## XXV

Constant to the fair Armenian,  
Gentle pleasures round her moved,  
Like a tutelary spirit  
Reverenced, like a sister, loved,  
Christian meekness smoothed for all the  
path of life,  
Who, loving most, should wiseliest love,  
their only strife.

## XXVI

Mute memento of that union  
In a Saxon church survives,  
Where a cross-legged Knight lies  
sculptured  
As between two wedded wives—  
Figures with armorial signs of race and birth,  
And the vain rank the pilgrims bore while  
yet on earth. 1830.

THE RUSSIAN FUGITIVE<sup>1</sup>

Early in life this story had interested me, and  
I often thought it would make a pleasing subject  
for an opera or musical drama.

## PART I

ENOUGH of rose-bud lips, and eyes  
Like harebells bathed in dew,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Of cheek that with carnation vies,  
And veins of violet hue;  
Earth wants not beauty that may scorn  
A likening to frail flowers;  
Yea, to the stars, if they were born  
For seasons and for hours.

Through Moscow's gates, with gold un-  
barred,  
Stepped One at dead of night,  
Whom such high beauty could not guard  
From meditated blight;  
By stealth she passed, and fled as fast  
As doth the hunted fawn,  
Nor stopped, till in the dappling east  
Appeared unwelcome dawn.

Seven days she lurked in brake and field,  
Seven nights her course renewed,  
Sustained by what her scrip might yield,  
Or berries of the wood;  
At length, in darkness travelling on,  
When lowly doors were shut,  
The haven of her hope she won,  
Her Foster-mother's hut.

"To put your love to dangerous proof  
I come," said she, "from far;  
For I have left my Father's roof,  
In terror of the Czar."  
No answer did the Matron give,  
No second look she cast,  
But hung upon the Fugitive,  
Embracing and embraced.

She led the Lady to a seat  
Beside the glimmering fire,  
Bathed duteously her wayworn feet,  
Prevented each desire :—  
The cricket chirped, the house-dog dozed,  
And on that simple bed,  
Where she in childhood had reposed,  
Now rests her weary head.

When she, whose couch had been the sod,  
Whose curtain, pine or thorn,  
Had breathed a sigh of thanks to God,  
Who comforts the forlorn;  
While over her the Matron bent  
Sleep sealed her eyes, and stole  
Feeling from limbs with travel spent,  
And trouble from the soul.

Refreshed, the Wanderer rose at morn,  
 And soon again was dight  
 In those unworthy vestments worn  
 Through long and perilous flight;  
 And "O beloved Nurse," she said,  
 "My thanks with silent tears  
 Have unto Heaven and You been paid:  
 Now listen to my fears!

"Have you forgot"—and here she smiled—  
 "The babbling flatteries  
 You lavished on me when a child  
 Disporting round your knees?  
 I was your lambkin, and your bird,  
 Your star, your gem, your flower;  
 Light words, that were more lightly heard  
 In many a cloudless hour!

The blossom you so fondly praised  
 Is come to bitter fruit;  
 A mighty One upon me gazed;  
 I spurned his lawless suit,  
 And must be hidden from his wrath:  
 You, Foster-father dear,  
 Will guide me in my forward path;  
 I may not tarry here!

I cannot bring to utter woe  
 Your proved fidelity."—  
 "Dear Child, sweet Mistress, say not so!  
 For you we both would die."  
 "Nay, nay, I come with semblance feigned  
 And cheek embrowned by art;  
 Yet, being inwardly unstained,  
 With courage will depart."

"But whither would you, could you, flee?  
 A poor Man's counsel take;  
 The Holy Virgin gives to me  
 A thought for your dear sake;  
 Rest, shielded by our Lady's grace,  
 And soon shall you be led  
 Forth to a safe abiding-place,  
 Where never foot doth tread."

## PART II

THE dwelling of this faithful pair  
 In a straggling village stood,  
 For One who breathed unquiet air  
 A dangerous neighbourhood;  
 But wide around lay forest ground  
 With thickets rough and blind;  
 And pine-trees made a heavy shade  
 Impervious to the wind.

And there, sequestered from the sight,  
 Was spread a treacherous swamp,  
 On which the noonday sun shed light  
 As from a lonely lamp;  
 And midway in the unsafe morass,  
 A single Island rose  
 Of firm dry ground, with healthful grass  
 Adorned, and shady boughs.

The Woodman knew, for such the craft  
 This Russian vassal plied,  
 That never fowler's gun, nor shaft  
 Of archer, there was tried;  
 A sanctuary seemed the spot  
 From all intrusion free;  
 And there he planned an artful Cot  
 For perfect secrecy.

With earnest pains unchecked by dread  
 Of Power's far-stretching hand,  
 The bold good Man his labour sped  
 At nature's pure command;  
 Heart-soothed, and busy as a wren,  
 While, in a hollow nook,  
 She moulds her sight-eluding den  
 Above a murmuring brook.

His task accomplished to his mind,  
 The twain ere break of day  
 Creep forth, and through the forest wind  
 Their solitary way;  
 Few words they speak, nor dare to slack  
 Their pace from mile to mile,  
 Till they have crossed the quaking marsh  
 And reached the lonely Isle.

The sun above the pine-trees showed  
 A bright and cheerful face;  
 And Ina looked for her abode,  
 The promised hiding-place;  
 She sought in vain, the Woodman smiled;  
 No threshold could be seen,  
 Nor roof, nor window;—all seemed wild  
 As it had ever been.

Advancing, you might guess an hour,  
 The front with such nice care  
 Is masked, "if house it be or bower,"  
 But in they entered are;  
 As shaggy as were wall and roof  
 With branches intertwined,  
 So smooth was all within, air-proof,  
 And delicately lined:

And hearth was there, and maple dish,  
And cups in seemly rows,  
And couch—all ready to a wish  
For nurture or repose ;  
And Heaven doth to her virtue grant  
That here she may abide  
In solitude, with every want  
By cautious love supplied.

No queen, before a shouting crowd,  
Led on in bridal state,  
E'er struggled with a heart so proud,  
Entering her palace gate :  
Rejoiced to bid the world farewell,  
No saintly anchoress  
E'er took possession of her cell  
With deeper thankfulness.

" Father of all, upon thy care  
And mercy am I thrown ;  
Be thou my safeguard !"—such her prayer  
When she was left alone,  
Kneeling amid the wilderness  
When joy had passed away,  
And smiles, fond efforts of distress  
To hide what they betray !

The prayer is heard, the Saints have seen,  
Diffused through form and face  
Resolves devotedly serene ;  
That monumental grace  
Of Faith, which doth all passions tame  
That Reason *should* control ;  
And shows in the untrembling frame  
A statue of the soul.

### PART III

'Tis sung in ancient minstrelsy  
That Phœbus wont to wear  
The leaves of any pleasant tree  
Around his golden hair ;  
Till Daphne, desperate with pursuit  
Of his imperious love,  
At her own prayer transformed, took root,  
A laurel in the grove.

Then did the Penitent adorn  
His brow with laurel green ;  
And 'mid his bright locks never shorn  
No meaner leaf was seen ;  
And poets sage, through every age,  
About their temples wound

The bay ; and conquerors thanked the  
Gods,  
With laurel chaplets crowned.

Into the mists of fabling Time  
So far runs back the praise  
Of Beauty, that disdains to climb  
Along forbidden ways ;  
That scorns temptation ; power defies  
Where mutual love is not ;  
And to the tomb for rescue flies  
When life would be a blot.

To this fair Votaress, a fate  
More mild doth Heaven ordain  
Upon her Island desolate ;  
And words, not breathed in vain,  
Might tell what intercourse she found,  
Her silence to endear ;  
What birds she tamed, what flowers the  
ground  
Sent forth her peace to cheer.

To one mute Presence, above all,  
Her soothed affections clung,  
A picture on the cabin wall  
By Russian usage hung—  
The Mother-maid, whose countenance  
bright  
With love abridged the day ;  
And, communed with by taper light,  
Chased spectral fears away.

And oft, as either Guardian came,  
The joy in that retreat  
Might any common friendship shame,  
So high their hearts would beat ;  
And to the lone Recluse, whate'er  
They brought, each visiting  
Was like the crowding of the year  
With a new burst of spring.

But, when she of her Parents thought,  
The pang was hard to bear ;  
And, if with all things not unwrought,  
That trouble still is near.  
Before her flight she had not dared  
Their constancy to prove,  
Too much the heroic Daughter feared  
The weakness of their love.

Dark is the past to them, and dark  
The future still must be,

Till pitying Saints conduct her bark  
 Into a safer sea—  
 Or gentle Nature close her eyes,  
 And set her Spirit free  
 From the altar of this sacrifice,  
 In vestal purity.

Yet, when above the forest-glooms  
 The white swans southward passed,  
 High as the pitch of their swift plumes  
 Her fancy rode the blast;  
 And bore her toward the fields of France  
 Her Father's native land,  
 To mingle in the rustic dance,  
 The happiest of the band !

Of those beloved fields she oft  
 Had heard her Father tell  
 In phrase that now with echoes soft  
 Haunted her lonely cell;  
 She saw the hereditary bowers,  
 She heard the ancestral stream;  
 The Kremlin and its haughty towers  
 Forgotten like a dream !

#### PART IV

THE ever-changing Moon had traced  
 Twelve times her monthly round,  
 When through the unfrequented Waste  
 Was heard a startling sound;  
 A shout thrice sent from one who chased  
 At speed a wounded deer,  
 Bounding through branches interlaced,  
 And where the wood was clear.

The fainting creature took the marsh,  
 And toward the Island fled,  
 While plovers screamed with tumult harsh  
 Above his antlered head;  
 This, Ina saw; and, pale with fear,  
 Shrunk to her citadel;  
 The desperate deer rushed on, and near  
 The tangled covert fell.

Across the marsh, the game in view,  
 The Hunter followed fast,  
 Nor paused, till o'er the stag he blew  
 A death-proclaiming blast;  
 Then, resting on her upright mind,  
 Came forth the Maid—"In me  
 Behold," she said, "a stricken Hind  
 Pursued by destiny !

From your deportment, Sir ! I deem  
 That you have worn a sword,  
 And will not hold in light esteem  
 A suffering woman's word;  
 There is my covert, there perchance  
 I might have lain concealed,  
 My fortunes hid, my countenance  
 Not even to you revealed.

Tears might be shed, and I might pray,  
 Crouching and terrified,  
 That what has been unveiled to day,  
 You would in mystery hide;  
 But I will not defile with dust  
 The knee that bends to adore  
 The God in heaven ;—attend, be just ;  
 This ask I, and no more !

I speak not of the winter's cold,  
 For summer's heat exchanged,  
 While I have lodged in this rough hold,  
 From social life estranged;  
 Nor yet of trouble and alarms:  
 High Heaven is my defence;  
 And every season has soft arms  
 For injured Innocence.

From Moscow to the Wilderness  
 It was my choice to come,  
 Lest virtue should be harbourless,  
 And honour want a home;  
 And happy were I, if the Czar  
 Retain his lawless will,  
 To end life here like this poor deer,  
 Or a lamb on a green hill."

"Are you the Maid," the Stranger cried,  
 "From Gallic parents sprung,  
 Whose vanishing was rumoured wide,  
 Sad theme for every tongue;  
 Who foiled an Emperor's eager quest ?  
 You, Lady, forced to wear  
 These rude habiliments, and rest  
 Your head in this dark lair !"

But wonder, pity, soon were quelled;  
 And in her face and mien  
 The soul's pure brightness he beheld  
 Without a veil between:  
 He loved, he hoped,—a holy flame  
 Kindled 'mid rapturous tears;  
 The passion of a moment came  
 As on the wings of years.

"Such bounty is no gift of chance,"  
 Exclaimed he; "righteous Heaven,  
 Preparing your deliverance,  
 To me the charge hath given.  
 The Czar full oft in words and deeds  
 Is stormy and self-willed;  
 But, when the Lady Catherine pleads,  
 His violence is stilled.

Leave open to my wish the course,  
 And I to her will go;  
 From that humane and heavenly source,  
 Good, only good, can flow."  
 Faint sanction given, the Cavalier  
 Was eager to depart,  
 Though question followed question, dear,  
 To the Maiden's filial heart.

Light was his step,—his hopes, more light,  
 Kept pace with his desires;  
 And the fifth morning gave him sight  
 Of Moscow's glittering spires.  
 He sued:—heart-smitten by the wrong,  
 To the lorn Fugitive  
 The Emperor sent a pledge as strong  
 As sovereign power could give.

O more than mighty change! If e'er  
 Amazement rose to pain,  
 And joy's excess produced a fear  
 Of something void and vain;  
 'Twas when the Parents, who had  
 mourned  
 So long the lost as dead,  
 Beheld their only Child returned,  
 The household floor to tread.

Soon gratitude gave way to love  
 Within the Maiden's breast;  
 Delivered and Deliverer move  
 In bridal garments drest;  
 Meek Catherine had her own reward;  
 The Czar bestowed a dower;  
 And universal Moscow shared  
 The triumph of that hour.

Flowers strewed the ground; the nuptial  
 feast  
 Was held with costly state;  
 And there, 'mid many a noble guest,  
 The Foster-parents sate;  
 Encouraged by the imperial eye,  
 They shrank not into shade;  
 Great was their bliss, the honour high  
 To them and nature paid! 1830.

## THE EGYPTIAN MAID

OR,

## THE ROMANCE OF THE WATER LILY

For the names and persons in the following poem, see the "History of the renowned Prince Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table;" for the rest the Author is answerable; only it may be proper to add, that the Lotus, with the bust of the Goddess appearing to rise out of the full-blown flower, was suggested by the beautiful work of ancient art, once included among the Townley Marbles, and now in the British Museum.

In addition to the short notice prefixed to this poem it may be worth while here to say that it rose out of a few words casually used in conversation by my nephew Henry Hutchinson. He was describing with great spirit the appearance and movement of a vessel which he seemed to admire more than any other he had ever seen, and said her name was the *Water Lily*. This plant has been my delight from my boyhood, as I have seen it floating on the lake; and that conversation put me upon constructing and composing the poem. Had I not heard those words it would never have been written. The form of the stanza is new, and is nothing but a repetition of the first five lines as they were thrown off, and is not perhaps well suited to narrative, and certainly would not have been trusted to had I thought at the beginning that the poem would have gone to such a length.

WHILE Merlin paced the Cornish sands,  
 Forth-looking toward the rocks of Scilly,  
 The pleased Enchanter was aware  
 Of a bright Ship that seemed to hang in  
 air,  
 Yet was she work of mortal hands,  
 And took from men her name—THE  
 WATER LILY.

Soft was the wind, that landward blew;  
 And, as the Moon, o'er some dark hill  
 ascendant,  
 Grows from a little edge of light  
 To a full orb, this Pinnacle bright  
 Became, as nearer to the coast she drew,  
 More glorious, with spread sail and stream-  
 ing pendant.

Upon this winged Shape so fair  
 Sage Merlin gazed with admiration:



Her lineaments, thought he, surpass  
 Aught that was ever shown in magic  
 glass;  
 Was ever built with patient care;  
 Or, at a touch, produced by happiest trans-  
 formation.

Now, though a Mechanist, whose skill  
 Shames the degenerate grasp of modern  
 science,  
 Grave Merlin (and belike the more  
 For practising occult and perilous lore)  
 Was subject to a freakish will  
 That sapped good thoughts, or scared them  
 with defiance.

Provoked to envious spleen, he cast  
 An altered look upon the advancing  
 Stranger  
 Whom he had hailed with joy, and  
 cried,  
 "My Art shall help to tame her pride—"  
 Anon the breeze became a blast,  
 And the waves rose, and sky portended  
 danger.

With thrilling word, and potent sign  
 Traced on the beach, his work the Sor-  
 cerer urges;  
 The clouds in blacker clouds are lost,  
 Like spiteful Fiends that vanish, crossed  
 By Fiends of aspect more malign;  
 And the winds roused the Deep with fiercer  
 scourges.

But worthy of the name she bore  
 Was this Sea-flower, this buoyant  
 Galley;  
 Supreme in loveliness and grace  
 Of motion, whether in the embrace  
 Of trusty anchorage, or scudding o'er  
 The main flood roughened into hill and  
 valley.

Behold, how wantonly she laves  
 Her sides, the Wizard's craft confound-  
 ing;  
 Like something out of Ocean sprung  
 To be for ever fresh and young,  
 Breasts the sea-flashes, and huge waves  
 Top-gallant high, rebounding and rebound-  
 ing!

But Ocean under magic heavens,  
 And cannot spare the Thing he cher-  
 ished:  
 Ah! what avails that she was fair,  
 Luminous, blithe, and debonair?  
 The storm has stripped her of her  
 leaves;  
 The Lily floats no longer!—She hath  
 perished.

Grieve for her,—she deserves no less;  
 So like, yet so unlike, a living Creature!  
 No heart had she, no busy brain;  
 Though loved, she could not love again;  
 Though pitied, *feel* her own distress;  
 Nor aught that troubles us, the fools of  
 Nature.

Yet is there cause for gushing tears;  
 So richly was this Galley laden,  
 A fairer than herself she bore,  
 And, in her struggles, cast ashore;  
 A lovely One, who nothing hears  
 Of wind or wave—a meek and guileless  
 Maiden.

Into a cave had Merlin fled  
 From mischief, caused by spells himself  
 had muttered;  
 And while, repentant all too late,  
 In moody posture there he sate,  
 He heard a voice, and saw, with half-  
 raised head,  
 A Visitant by whom these words were  
 uttered;

"On Christian service this frail Bark  
 Sailed" (hear me, Merlin!) "under  
 high protection,  
 Though on her prow a sign of heathen  
 power  
 Was carved—a Goddess with a Lily  
 flower,  
 The old Egyptian's emblematic mark  
 Of joy immortal and of pure affection.

Her course was for the British strand;  
 Her freight, it was a Damsel peerless;  
 God reigns above, and Spirits strong  
 May gather to avenge this wrong  
 Done to the Princess, and her Land  
 Which she in duty left, sad but not cheer-  
 less.

And to Caerleon's loftiest tower  
Soon will the Knights of Arthur's Table  
A cry of lamentation send ;  
And all will weep who there attend,  
To grace that Stranger's bridal hour,  
For whom the sea was made unnavigable.

Shame ! should a Child of royal line  
Die through the blindness of thy  
malice ?"

Thus to the Necromancer spake  
Nina, the Lady of the Lake,  
A gentle Sorceress, and benign,  
Who ne'er embittered any good man's  
chalice.

"What boots," continued she, "to  
mourn ?"

To expiate thy sin endeavour :  
From the bleak isle where she is laid,  
Fetched by our art, the Egyptian Maid  
May yet to Arthur's court be borne  
Cold as she is, ere life be fled for ever.

My pearly Boat, a shining Light,  
That brought me down that sunless river,  
Will bear me on from wave to wave,  
And back with her to this sea-cave ;—  
Then Merlin ! for a rapid flight  
Through air, to thee my Charge will I  
deliver.

The very swiftest of thy cars  
Must, when my part is done, be ready ;  
Meanwhile, for further guidance, look  
Into thy own prophetic book ;  
And, if that fail, consult the Stars  
To learn thy course ; farewell ! be prompt  
and steady."

This scarcely spoken, she again  
Was seated in her gleaming shallop,  
That, o'er the yet-distempered Deep,  
Pursued its way with bird-like sweep,  
Or like a steed, without a rein,  
Urged o'er the wilderness in sportive  
gallop.

Soon did the gentle Nina reach  
That Isle without a house or haven ;  
Landing, she found not what she sought,  
Nor saw of wreck or ruin aught  
But a carved Lotus cast upon the beach  
By the fierce waves, a flower in marble  
graven.

Sad relique, but how fair the while !  
For gently each from each retreating  
With backward curve, the leaves revealed  
The bosom half, and half concealed,  
Of a Divinity, that seemed to smile  
On 'Nina, as she passed, with hopeful  
greeting.

No quest was hers of vague desire,  
Of tortured hope and purpose shaken ;  
Following the margin of a bay,  
She spied the lonely Castaway,  
Unmarred, unstripped of her attire,  
But with closed eyes,—of breath and bloom  
forsaken.

Then Nina, stooping down, embraced,  
With tenderness and mild emotion,  
The Damsel, in that trance embound ;  
And, while she raised her from the  
ground,  
And in the pearly shallop placed,  
Sleep fell upon the air, and stilled the ocean.

The turmoil hushed, celestial springs  
Of music opened, and there came a  
blending  
Of fragrance, underived from earth,  
With gleams that owed not to the sun  
their birth,  
And that soft rustling of invisible wings  
Which Angels make, on works of love  
descending.

And Nina heard a sweeter voice  
Than if the Goddess of the flower had  
spoken :

"Thou hast achieved, fair Dame ! what  
none  
Less pure in spirit could have done ;  
Go, in thy enterprise rejoice !  
Air, earth, sea, sky, and heaven, success  
betoken."

So cheered, she left that Island bleak,  
A bare rock of the Scilly cluster ;  
And, as they traversed the smooth brine,  
The self-illuminine Brigantine  
Shed, on the Slumberer's cold wan cheek  
And pallid brow, a melancholy lustre.

Fleet was their course, and when they  
came  
To the dim cavern, whence the river

Issued into the salt-sea flood,  
Merlin, as fixed in thought he stood,  
Was thus accosted by the Dame;  
"Behold to thee my Charge I now deliver !

But where attends thy chariot—where?"—  
Quoth Merlin, "Even as I was bidden,  
So have I done; as trusty as thy barge  
My vehicle shall prove—O precious  
Charge !

If this be sleep, how soft ! if death, how  
fair !  
Much have my books disclosed, but the  
end is hidden."

He spake; and gliding into view  
Forth from the grotto's dimmest chamber  
Came two mute Swans, whose plumes of  
dusky white  
Changed, as the pair approached the  
light,  
Drawing an ebon car, their hue  
(Like clouds of sunset) into lucid amber.

Once more did gentle Nina lift  
The Princess, passive to all changes:  
The car received her:—then up-went  
Into the ethereal element  
The Birds with progress smooth and swift  
As thought, when through bright regions  
memory ranges.

Sage Merlin, at the Slumberer's side,  
Instructs the Swans their way to measure;  
And soon Caerleon's towers appeared,  
And notes of minstrelsy were heard  
From rich pavilions spreading wide,  
For some high day of long-expected pleasure.

Awe-stricken stood both Knights and  
Dames  
Ere on firm ground the car alighted;  
Eftsoons astonishment was past,  
For in that face they saw the last  
Last lingering look of clay, that tames  
All pride; by which all happiness is  
blighted.

Said Merlin, "Mighty King, fair Lords,  
Away with feast and tilt and tourney!  
Ye saw, throughout this royal House,  
Ye heard, a rocking marvellous  
Of turrets, and a clash of swords  
Self-shaken, as I closed my airy journey.

Lo ! by a destiny well known  
To mortals, joy is turned to sorrow;  
This is the wished-for Bride, the Maid  
Of Egypt, from a rock conveyed  
Where she by shipwreck had been  
thrown;  
Ill sight ! but grief may vanish ere the  
morrow."

"Though vast thy power, thy words are  
weak,"  
Exclaimed the King, "a mockery hate-  
ful;  
Dutiful Child, her lot how hard !  
Is this her piety's reward?  
Those watery locks, that bloodless cheek !  
O winds without remorse ! O shore un-  
grateful !

Rich robes are fretted by the moth;  
Towers, temples, fall by stroke of  
thunder;  
Will that, or deeper thoughts, abate  
A Father's sorrow for her fate?  
He will repent him of his troth;  
His brain will burn, his stout heart split  
asunder.

Alas ! and I have caused this woe;  
For, when my prowess from invading  
Neighbours  
Had freed his Realm, he plighted word  
That he would turn to Christ our Lord,  
And his dear Daughter on a Knight  
bestow  
Whom I should choose for love and match-  
less labours.

Her birth was heathen; but a fence  
Of holy Angels round her hovered:  
A Lady added to my court  
So fair, of such divine report  
And worship, seemed a recompence  
For fifty kingdoms by my sword recovered.

Ask not for whom, O Champions true !  
She was reserved by me her life's be-  
trayer;  
She who was meant to be a bride  
Is now a corse: then put aside  
Vain thoughts, and speed ye, with obser-  
vance due  
Of Christian rites, in Christian ground to  
lay her."

"The tomb," said Merlin, "may not close  
Upon her yet, earth hide her beauty;  
Not froward to thy sovereign will  
Esteem me, Liege! if I, whose skill  
Wafted her hither, interpose  
To check this pious haste of erring duty.

My books command me to lay bare  
The secret thou art bent on keeping:  
Here must a high attest be given,  
*What* Bridegroom was for her ordained  
by Heaven.

And in my glass significant there are  
Of things that may to gladness turn this  
weeping.

For this, approaching, One by One,  
Thy Knights must touch the cold hand  
of the Virgin;

So, for the favoured One, the Flower  
may bloom

Once more: but, if unchangeable her  
doom,

If life departed be for ever gone,  
Some blest assurance, from this cloud  
emerging,

May teach him to bewail his loss;  
Not with a grief that, like a vapour, rises  
And melts; but grief devout that shall  
endure,

And a perpetual growth secure  
Of purposes which no false thought shall  
cross,

A harvest of high hopes and noble enter-  
prises."

"So be it," said the King;—"anon,  
Here, where the Princess lies, begin the  
trial;

Knights each in order as ye stand  
Step forth."—To touch the pallid hand  
Sir Agravaire advanced; no sign he won  
From Heaven or earth;—Sir Kaye had like  
denial.

Abashed, Sir Dinas turned away;  
Even for Sir Percival was no disclosure;  
Though he, devoutest of all Champions,  
ere

He reached that ebony car, the bier  
Whereon diffused like snow the Damsel  
lay,

Full thrice had crossed himself in meek  
composure.

Imagine (but ye Saints! who can?)  
How in still air the balance trembled—  
The wishes, peradventure the despites  
That overcame some not ungenerous  
Knights;  
And all the thoughts that lengthened out  
a span

Of time to Lords and Ladies thus assembled.

What patient confidence was here!  
And there how many bosoms panted!  
While drawing toward the car Sir  
Gawaine, mailed

For tournament, his beaver veiled,  
And softly touched; but, to his princely  
cheer

And high expectancy, no sign was granted.

Next, disencumbered of his harp,  
Sir Tristram, dear to thousands as a  
brother,

Came to the proof, nor grieved that there  
ensued

No change;—the fair Izonda he had  
wooed

With love too true, a love with pangs too  
sharp,

From hope too distant, not to dread another.

Not so Sir Launcelot;—from Heaven's  
grace

A sign he craved, tired slave of vain  
contrition;

The royal Guinever looked passing glad  
When his touch failed.—Next came Sir  
Galahad;

He paused, and stood entranced by that  
still face

Whose features he had seen in noontide  
vision.

For late, as near a murmuring stream  
He rested 'mid an arbour green and  
shady.

Nina, the good Enchantress, shed  
A light around his mossy bed;

And, at her call, a waking dream  
Prefigured to his sense the Egyptian Lady.

Now, while his bright-haired front he  
bowed,

And stood, far-kenned by mantle furred  
with ermine,

As o'er the insensate Body hung  
The enrapt, the beautiful, the young,

Belief sank deep into the crowd  
That he the solemn issue would determine.

Nor deem it strange; the Youth had  
worn  
That very mantle on a day of glory,  
The day when he achieved that match-  
less feat,  
The marvel of the PERILOUS SEAT,  
Which whosoe'er approached of strength  
was shorn,  
Though King or Knight the most renowned  
in story.

He touched with hesitating hand—  
And lo! those Birds, far-famed through  
Love's dominions,  
The Swans, in triumph clap their wings;  
And their necks play, involved in rings,  
Like sinless snakes in Eden's happy  
land;—  
"Mine is she," cried the Knight;—again  
they clapped their pinions.

"Mine was she—mine she is, though  
dead,  
And to her name my soul shall cleave in  
sorrow;"  
Whereat, a tender twilight streak  
Of colour dawned upon the Damsel's  
cheek;  
And her lips, quickening with uncertain  
red,  
Seemed from each other a faint warmth to  
borrow.

Deep was the awe, the rapture high,  
Of love emboldened, hope with dread  
entwining,  
When, to the mouth, relenting Death  
Allowed a soft and flower-like breath,  
Precursor to a timid sigh,  
To lifted eyelids, and a doubtful shining.

In silence did King Arthur gaze  
Upon the signs that pass away or tarry;  
In silence watched the gentle strife  
Of Nature leading back to life;  
Then eased his soul at length by praise  
Of God, and Heaven's pure Queen—the  
blissful Mary.

Then said he, "Take her to thy heart,  
Sir Galahad! a treasure, that God giveth,

Bound by indissoluble ties to thee  
Through mortal change and immortality;  
Be happy and unenvied, thou who art  
A goodly Knight that hath no peer that  
liveth!"

Not long the Nuptials were delayed;  
And sage tradition still rehearses  
The pomp, the glory of that hour  
When toward the altar from her bower  
King Arthur led the Egyptian Maid,  
And Angels carolled these far-echoed  
verses;—

Who shrinks not from alliance  
Of evil with good Powers,  
To God proclaims defiance,  
And mocks whom he adores.

A Ship to Christ devoted  
From the Land of Nile did go;  
Alas! the bright Ship floated,  
An Idol at her prow.

By magic domination,  
The Heaven-permitted vent  
Of purblind mortal passion,  
Was wrought her punishment.

The Flower the Form within it,  
What served they in her need?  
Her port she could not win it,  
Nor from mishap be freed.

The tempest overcame her,  
And she was seen no more;  
But gently, gently blame her—  
She cast a Pearl ashore.

The Maid to Jesu hearkened,  
And kept to him her faith,  
Till sense in death was darkened,  
Or sleep akin to death.

But Angels round her pillow  
Kept watch, a viewless band;  
And, billow favouring billow,  
She reached the destined strand.

Blest Pair! whate'er befall you,  
Your faith in Him approve  
Who from frail earth can call you  
To bowers of endless love!

# THE POET AND THE CAGED TURTLEDOVE

Written at Rydal Mount. This dove was one of a pair that had been given to my daughter by our excellent friend, Miss Jewsbury, who went to India with her husband, Mr. Fletcher, where she died of cholera. The dove survived its mate many years, and was killed, to our great sorrow, by a neighbour's cat that got in at the window and dragged it partly out of the cage. These verses were composed extempore, to the letter, in the Terrace Summer-house before spoken of. It was the habit of the bird to begin cooing and murmuring whenever it heard me making my verses.

As often as I murmur here  
My half-formed melodies,  
Straight from her osier mansion near,  
The Turtle-dove replies:  
Though silent as a leaf before,  
The captive promptly coos;  
Is it to teach her own soft lore,  
Or second my weak Muse?

I rather think, the gentle Dove  
Is murmuring a reproof,  
Displeased that I from lays of love  
Have dared to keep aloof;  
That I, a Bard of hill and dale,  
Have carolled, fancy free,  
As if nor dove nor nightingale,  
Had heart or voice for me.

If such thy meaning, O forbear,  
Sweet Bird! to do me wrong;  
Love, blessed Love, is everywhere  
The spirit of my song:  
'Mid grove, and by the calm fireside,  
Love animates my lyre—  
That coo again!—'tis not to chide,  
I feel, but to inspire. 1830.

## PRESENTIMENTS

Written at Rydal Mount.

PRESENTIMENTS! they judge not right  
Who deem that ye from open light  
Retire in fear of shame;

All *heaven-born* Instincts shun the touch  
Of vulgar sense,—and, being such,  
Such privilege ye claim.

The tear whose source I could not guess,  
The deep sigh that seemed fatherless,  
Were mine in early days;  
And now, unforced by time to part  
With fancy, I obey my heart,  
And venture on your praise.

What though some busy foes to good,  
Too potent over nerve and blood,  
Lurk near you—and combine  
To taint the health which ye infuse;  
This hides not from the moral Muse  
Your origin divine.

How oft from you, derided Powers!  
Comes Faith that in auspicious hours  
Builds castles, not of air:  
Bodings unsanctioned by the will  
Flow from your visionary skill,  
And teach us to beware.

The bosom-weight, your stubborn gift,  
That no philosophy can lift,  
Shall vanish, if ye please,  
Like morning mist: and, where it lay,  
The spirits at your bidding play  
In gaiety and ease.

Star-guided contemplations move  
Through space, though calm, not raised  
above  
Prognostics that ye rule;  
The naked Indian of the wild,  
And haply, too, the cradled Child,  
Are pupils of your school.

But who can fathom your intents,  
Number their signs or instruments?  
A rainbow, a sunbeam,  
A subtle smell that Spring unbinds,  
Dead pause abrupt of midnight winds,  
An echo, or a dream.

The laughter of the Christmas hearth  
With sighs of self-exhausted mirth  
Ye feelingly reprove;  
And daily, in the conscious breast,  
Your visitations are a test  
And exercise of love.

When some great change gives boundless  
scope

To an exulting Nation's hope,  
Oft, startled and made wise  
By your low-breathed interpretations,  
The simply-meek foretaste the springs  
Of bitter contraries.

Ye daunt the proud array of war,  
Pervade the lonely ocean far  
As sail hath been unfurled ;  
For dancers in the festive hall  
What ghastly partners hath your call  
Fetched from the shadowy world.

'Tis said, that warnings ye dispense,  
Emboldened by a keener sense ;

That men have lived for whom,  
With dread precision, ye made clear  
The hour that in a distant year  
Should knell them to the tomb.

Unwelcome insight ! Yet there are,  
Blest times when mystery is laid bare,  
Truth shows a glorious face,  
While on that isthmus which commands  
The councils of both worlds, she stands,  
Sage Spirits ! by your grace.

God, who instructs the brutes to scent  
All changes of the element,  
Whose wisdom fixed the scale  
Of natures, for our wants provides  
By higher, sometimes humbler, guides,  
When lights of reason fail. 1830.

#### "IN THESE FAIR VALES HATH MANY A TREE"

Engraven, during my absence in Italy, upon a  
brass plate inserted in the Stone.

IN these fair vales hath many a Tree  
At Wordsworth's suit been spared ;  
And from the builder's hand this Stone,  
For some rude beauty of its own,  
Was rescued by the Bard :  
So let it rest ; and time will come  
When here the tender-hearted  
May heave a gentle sigh for him,  
As one of the departed. 1830.

#### ELEGIAC MUSINGS

IN THE GROUNDS OF COLEORTON HALL,  
THE SEAT OF THE LATE SIR G. H.  
BEAUMONT, BART.

These verses were, in part composed on horse-  
back during a storm, while I was on my way from  
Coleorton to Cambridge: they are alluded to  
elsewhere.

In these grounds stands the Parish Church,  
wherein is a mural monument bearing an Inscrip-  
tion which, in deference to the earnest request of  
the deceased, is confined to name, dates, and  
these words:—"Enter not into judgment with thy  
servant, O LORD !"

WITH copious eulogy in prose or rhyme  
Graven on the tomb we struggle against  
Time,

Alas, how feebly ! but our feelings rise  
And still we struggle when a good man  
dies :

Such offering BEAUMONT dreaded and for-  
bade,

A spirit meek in self-abasement clad.  
Yet *here* at least—though few have num-  
bered days

That shunned so modestly the light of  
praise—

His graceful manners, and the temperate ray  
Of that arch fancy which would round him  
play,

Brightening a converse never known to  
swerve

From courtesy and delicate reserve ;  
That sense, the bland philosophy of life,  
Which checked discussion ere it warmed to  
strife—

Those rare accomplishments, and varied  
powers,

Might have their record among sylvan  
bowers.

Oh, fled for ever ! vanished like a blast  
That shook the leaves in myriads as it  
passed ;—

Gone from this world of earth, air, sea, and  
sky,

From all its spirit-moving imagery,  
Intensely studied with a painter's eye,  
A poet's heart ; and, for congenial view,  
Portrayed with happiest pencil, not untrue  
To common recognitions while the line  
Flowed in a course of sympathy divine ;—

Oh! severed, too abruptly, from delights  
That all the seasons shared with equal  
rights;—

Rapt in the grace of undissembled age,  
From soul-felt music, and the treasured  
page

Lit by that evening lamp which loved to  
shed

Its mellow lustre round thy honoured head;  
While Friends beheld thee give with eye,  
voice, mien,

More than theatric force to Shakspeare's  
scene;—

If thou hast heard me—if thy Spirit know  
Aught of these bowers and whence their  
pleasures flow;

If things in our remembrance held so  
dear,

And thoughts and projects fondly cherished  
here,

To thy exalted nature only seem  
Time's vanities, light fragments of earth's  
dream—

Rebuke us not!—The mandate is obeyed  
That said, "Let praise be mute where I  
am laid;"

The holier deprecation, given in trust  
To the cold marble, waits upon thy dust;  
Yet have we found how slowly genuine  
grief

From *silent* admiration wins relief.  
Too long abashed thy Name is like a rose  
That doth "within itself its sweetness  
close;"

A drooping daisy changed into a cup  
In which her bright-eyed beauty is shut  
up.

Within these groves, where still are flitting  
by

Shades of the Past, oft noticed with a  
sigh,

Shall stand a votive Tablet, haply free,  
When towers and temples fall, to speak of  
Thee!

If sculptured emblems of our mortal doom  
Recall not there the wisdom of the Tomb,  
Green ivy risen from out the cheerful earth,  
Will fringe the lettered stone; and herbs  
spring forth,

Whose fragrance, by soft dews and rain  
unbound,

Shall penetrate the heart without a wound;  
While truth and love their purposes fulfil,  
Commemorating genius, talent, skill,

That could not lie concealed where Thou  
wert known;

Thy virtues *He* must judge, and He alone,  
The God upon whose mercy they are  
thrown. Nov. 1830.

# "CHATSWORTH! THY STATELY MANSION, AND THE PRIDE"

I have reason to remember the day that gave  
rise to this Sonnet, the 6th of November 1830.  
Having undertaken, a great feat for me, to ride  
my daughter's pony from Westmoreland to Cam-  
bridge, that she might have the use of it while on  
a visit to her uncle at Trinity Lodge, on my way  
from Bakewell to Matlock I turned aside to  
Chatsworth, and had scarcely gratified my  
curiosity by the sight of that celebrated place  
before there came on a severe storm of wind and  
rain which continued till I reached Derby, both  
man and pony in a pitiable plight. For myself,  
I went to bed at noon-day. In the course of that  
journey I had to encounter a storm, worse if  
possible, in which the pony could (or would) only  
make his way slantwise. I mention this merely  
to add that notwithstanding this battering I  
composed, on horseback, the lines to the memory  
of Sir George Beaumont, suggested during my  
recent visit to Coleorton.

CHATSWORTH! thy stately mansion, and  
the pride

Of thy domain, strange contrast do present  
To house and home in many a craggy rent  
Of the wild Peak; where new-born waters  
glide

Through fields whose thrifty occupants  
abide

As in a dear and chosen banishment,  
With every semblance of entire content;  
So kind is simple Nature, fairly tried!  
Yet He whose heart in childhood gave her  
troth

To pastoral dales, thin-set with modest  
farms,

May learn, if judgment strengthen with his  
growth,

That, not for Fancy only, pomp hath  
charms;

And, strenuous to protect from lawless  
harms

The extremes of favoured life, may honour  
both. 1830.



## TO THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT

Painted at Rydal Mount, by W. Pickersgill, Esq., for St. John's College, Cambridge.

The six last lines of this Sonnet are not written for poetical effect, but as a matter of fact, which, in more than one instance, could not escape my notice in the servants of the house.

Go, faithful Portrait ! and where long bath knelt

Margaret, the Saintly Foundress, take thy place ;

And, if Time spare the colours for the grace Which to the work surpassing skill hath dealt,

Thou, on thy rock reclined, though kingdoms melt

And states be torn up by the roots, wilt seem To breathe in rural peace, to hear the stream,

And think and feel as once the Poet felt. Whate'er thy fate, those features have not grown

Unrecognised through many a household tear

More prompt, more glad, to fall than drops of dew

By morning shed around a flower half-blown ;

Tears of delight, that testified how true To life thou art, and, in thy truth, how dear !

1830.

## THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK

Written at Rydal Mount. The Rock stands on the right hand a little way leading up the middle road from Rydal to Grasmere. We have been in the habit of calling it the glow-worm rock from the number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging on it as described. The tuft of primrose has, I fear, been washed away by the heavy rains.

A ROCK there is whose homely front

The passing traveller slights ;

Yet there the glow-worms hang their lamps, Like stars, at various heights ;

And one coy Primrose to that Rock

The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,

What kingdoms overthrown, Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft

And marked it for my own ;  
A lasting link in Nature's chain  
From highest heaven let down !

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,  
Their fellowship renew ;  
The stems are faithful to the root,  
That worketh out of view ;  
And to the rock the root adheres  
In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,  
Though threatening still to fall ;  
The earth is constant to her sphere ;  
And God upholds them all :  
So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads  
Her annual funeral.

\* \* \* \*

Here closed the meditative strain ;  
But air breathed soft that day,  
The hoary mountain-heights were cheered,  
The sunny vale looked gay ;  
And to the Primrose of the Rock  
I gave this after-lay.

I sang—Let myriads of bright flowers,  
Like Thee, in field and grove  
Revive unenvied ;—mightier far,  
Than tremblings that reprove  
Our vernal tendencies to hope,  
Is God's redeeming love ;

That love which changed—for wan disease,  
For sorrow that had bent  
O'er hopeless dust, for withered age—  
Their moral element,  
And turned the thistles of a curse  
To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,  
The reasoning Sons of Men,  
From one oblivious winter called  
Shall rise, and breathe again ;  
And in eternal summer lose  
Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends  
This prescience from on high,  
The faith that elevates the just,  
Before and when they die ;  
And makes each soul a separate heaven,  
A court for Deity.

1831.

YARROW REVISITED, AND  
OTHER POEMS

COMPOSED (TWO EXCEPTED) DURING A  
TOUR IN SCOTLAND AND ON THE  
ENGLISH BORDER, IN THE AUTUMN OF  
1831.

In the autumn of 1831, my daughter and I set off from Rydal to visit Sir Walter Scott before his departure for Italy. This journey had been delayed by an inflammation in my eyes till we found that the time appointed for his leaving home would be too near for him to receive us without considerable inconvenience. Nevertheless we proceeded and reached Abbotsford on Monday. I was then scarcely able to lift up my eyes to the light. How sadly changed did I find him from the man I had seen so healthy, gay, and hopeful, a few years before, when he said at the inn at Paterdale, in my presence, his daughter Anne also being there, with Mr. Lockhart, my own wife and daughter, and Mr. Quillinan,—“I mean to live till I am *eighty*, and shall write as long as I live.” But to return to Abbotsford, the inmates and guests we found there were Sir Walter, Major Scott, Anne Scott, and Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart, Mr. Liddell, his Lady and Brother, and Mr. Allan the painter, and Mr. Laidlaw, a very old friend of Sir Walter's. One of Burns's sons, an officer in the Indian service, had left the house a day or two before, and had kindly expressed his regret that he could not await my arrival, a regret that I may truly say was mutual. In the evening, Mr. and Mrs. Liddell sang, and Mrs. Lockhart chanted old ballads to her harp; and Mr. Allan, hanging over the back of a chair, told and acted odd stories in a humorous way. With this exhibition and his daughter's singing, Sir Walter was much amused, as indeed were we all as far as circumstances would allow. But what is most worthy of mention is the admirable demeanour of Major Scott during the following evening, when the Liddells were gone and only ourselves and Mr. Allan were present. He had much to suffer from the sight of his father's infirmities and from the great change that was about to take place at the residence he had built, and where he had long lived in so much prosperity and happiness. But what struck me most was the patient kindness with which he supported himself under the many fretful expressions that his sister Anne addressed to him or uttered in his hearing. She, poor thing, as mistress of that house, had been subject, after her mother's death, to a heavier load of care and responsibility and greater sacri-

fices of time than one of such a constitution of body and mind was able to bear. Of this, Dora and I were made so sensible, that, as soon as we had crossed the Tweed on our departure, we gave vent at the same moment to our apprehensions that her brain would fail and she would go out of her mind, or that she would sink under the trials she had passed and those which awaited her. On Tuesday morning Sir Walter Scott accompanied us and most of the party to Newark Castle on the Yarrow. When we alighted from the carriages he walked pretty stoutly, and had great pleasure in revisiting those his favourite haunts. Of that excursion the verses “Yarrow revisited” are a memorial. Notwithstanding the romance that pervades Sir Walter's works and attaches to many of his habits, there is too much pressure of fact for these verses to harmonise as much as I could wish with other poems. On our return in the afternoon we had to cross the Tweed directly opposite Abbotsford. The wheels of our carriage grated upon the pebbles in the bed of the stream, that there flows somewhat rapidly; a rich but sad light of rather a purple than a golden hue was spread over the Eildon hills at that moment; and, thinking it probable that it might be the last time Sir Walter would cross the stream, I was not a little moved, and expressed some of my feelings in the sonnet beginning—“A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain.” At noon on Thursday we left Abbotsford, and in the morning of that day Sir Walter and I had a serious conversation *elle-à-elle*, when he spoke with gratitude of the happy life which upon the whole he had led. He had written in my daughter's Album, before he came into the breakfast-room that morning, a few stanzas addressed to her, and, while putting the book into her hand, in his own study, standing by his desk, he said to her in my presence—“I should not have done anything of this kind but for your father's sake: they are probably the last verses I shall ever write.” They show how much his mind was impaired, not by the strain of thought but by the execution, some of the lines being imperfect, and one stanza wanting corresponding rhymes: one letter, the initial S, had been omitted in the spelling of his own name. In this interview also it was that, upon my expressing a hope of his health being benefited by the climate of the country to which he was going, and by the interest he would take in the classic remembrances of Italy, he made use of the quotation from “Yarrow unvisited” as recorded by me in the “Musings at Aquapendente” six years afterwards. Mr. Lockhart has mentioned in his Life of him what I heard from several quarters while abroad, both at Rome and elsewhere, that little seemed to interest him but what he could collect

or heard of the fugitive Stuarts and their adherents who had followed them into exile. Both the "Yarrow revisited" and the "Sonnet" were sent him before his departure from England. Some further particulars of the conversations which occurred during this visit I should have set down had they not been already accurately recorded by Mr. Lockhart. I first became acquainted with this great and amiable man—Sir Walter Scott—in the year 1803, when my sister and I, making a tour in Scotland, were hospitably received by him in Lasswade upon the banks of the Esk, where he was then living. We saw a good deal of him in the course of the following week: the particulars are given in my sister's Journal of that tour.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.,

AS A TESTIMONY OF FRIENDSHIP, AND  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT  
OF INTELLECTUAL OBLIGATIONS,  
THESE MEMORIALS ARE AFFECTIONATELY  
INSCRIBED

RYDAL MOUNT, Dec. 11, 1834.

I

The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott and other Friends visiting the Banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford, for Naples.

The title *Yarrow Revisited* will stand in no need of explanation for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated Stream.

THE gallant Youth, who may have gained,  
Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"  
Was but an Infant in the lap  
When first I looked on Yarrow;  
Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate  
Long left without a warder,  
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,  
Great Minstrel of the Border!

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet  
day,

Their dignity installing  
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves  
Were on the bough, or falling;  
But breezes played, and sunshine gleamed—  
The forest to embolden;  
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot  
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on  
In foamy agitation;  
And slept in many a crystal pool  
For quiet contemplation:  
No public and no private care  
The freeborn mind enthralled,  
We made a day of happy hours,  
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of youth,  
With freaks of graceful folly,—  
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,  
Her Night not melancholy;  
Past, present, future, all appeared  
In harmony united,  
Like guests that meet, and some from far,  
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods  
And down the meadow ranging,  
Did meet us with unaltered face,  
Though we were changed and changing;  
If, *then*, some natural shadows spread  
Our inward prospect over,  
The soul's deep valley was not slow  
Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,  
And her divine employment!  
The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons  
For hope and calm enjoyment;  
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,  
Has o'er their pillow brooded;  
And Care waylays their steps—a Sprite  
Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT! compelled to change  
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot  
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes;  
And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot  
For mild Sorento's breezy waves;  
May classic Fancy, linking  
With native Fancy her fresh aid,  
Preserve thy heart from sinking!

Oh! while they minister to thee,  
Each vying with the other,  
May Health return to mellow Age  
With Strength, her venturous brother;  
And Tiber, and each brook and rill  
Renowned in song and story,  
With unimagined beauty shine,  
Nor lose one ray of glory!

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,  
 By tales of love and sorrow,  
 Of faithful love, undaunted truth,  
 Hast shed the power of Yarrow;  
 And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,  
 Wherever they invite Thee,  
 At parent Nature's grateful call,  
 With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,  
 Such looks of love and honour  
 As thy own Yarrow gave to me  
 When first I gazed upon her;  
 Beheld what I had feared to see,  
 Unwilling to surrender  
 Dreams treasured up from early days,  
 The holy and the tender.

And what, for this frail world, were all  
 That mortals do or suffer,  
 Did no responsive harp, no pen,  
 Memorial tribute offer?  
 Yea, what were mighty Nature's self?  
 Her features, could they win us,  
 Unhelped by the poetic voice  
 That hourly speaks within us?

Nor deem that localised Romance  
 Plays false with our affections;  
 Unsanctifies our tears—made sport  
 For fanciful dejections:  
 Ah, no! the visions of the past  
 Sustain the heart in feeling  
 Life as she is—our changeful Life,  
 With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day  
 In Yarrow's groves were centred;  
 Who through the silent portal arch  
 Of mouldering Newark entered;  
 And clomb the winding stair that once  
 Too timidly was mounted  
 By the "last Minstrel," (not the last!)  
 Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream!  
 Fulfil thy pensive duty,  
 Well pleased that future Bards should chant  
 For simple hearts thy beauty;  
 To dream-light dear while yet unseen,  
 Dear to the common sunshine,  
 And dearer still, as now I feel,  
 To memory's shadowy moonshine!

## II

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT  
 FROM ABBOTSFORD, FOR NAPLES

A TROUBLE, not of clouds, or weeping rain,  
 Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light  
 Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple  
 height:  
 Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain  
 For kindred Power departing from their  
 sight;  
 While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a  
 blithe strain,  
 Saddens his voice again, and yet again.  
 Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners! for the  
 might  
 Of the whole world's good wishes with him  
 goes;  
 Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue  
 Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror  
 knows  
 Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,  
 Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,  
 Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope!

## III

A PLACE OF BURIAL IN THE SOUTH OF  
 SCOTLAND

Similar places for burial are not unfrequent in Scotland. The one that suggested this Sonnet lies on the banks of a small stream called the Wauchope that flows into the Esk near Langholme. Mickie, who, as it appears from his poem on Sir Martin, was not without genuine poetic feelings, was born and passed his boyhood in this neighbourhood, under his father, who was a minister of the Scotch Kirk. The Esk, both above and below Langholme, flows through a beautiful country, and the two streams of the Wauchope and the Ewes, which join it near that place, are such as a pastoral poet would delight in.

PART fenced by man, part by a rugged  
 steep  
 That curbs a foaming brook, a Grave-yard  
 lies;  
 The hare's best couching-place for fearless  
 sleep;  
 Which moonlit elves, far seen by credulous  
 eyes,  
 Enter in dance. Of church, or sabbath ties,

No vestige now remains; yet thither creep  
 Bereft Ones, and in lowly anguish weep  
 Their prayers out to the wind and naked  
 skies.  
 Proud tomb is none; but rudely-sculptured  
 knights,  
 By humble choice of plain old times, are  
 seen  
 Level with earth, among the hillocks green:  
 Union not sad, when sunny daybreak  
 smites  
 The spangled turf, and neighbouring  
 thickets ring  
 With *jubilate* from the choirs of spring!

## IV

ON THE SIGHT OF A MANSE IN THE SOUTH  
OF SCOTLAND

The manses in Scotland and the gardens and grounds about them have seldom that attractive appearance which is common about our English parsonages, even when the clergyman's income falls below the average of the Scotch minister's. This is not merely owing to the one country being poor in comparison with the other, but arises rather out of the equality of their benefices, so that no one has enough to spare for decorations that might serve as an example for others; whereas, with us, the taste of the richer incumbent extends its influence more or less to the poorest. After all, in these observations the surface only of the matter is touched. I once heard a conversation in which the Roman Catholic Religion was derided on account of its abuses. "You cannot deny, however," said a lady of the party, repeating an expression used by Charles II., "that it is the religion of a gentleman." It may be left to the Scotch themselves to determine how far this observation applies to their Kirk, while it cannot be denied, if it is wanting in that characteristic quality, the aspect of common life, so far as concerns its beauty, must suffer. Sincere christian piety may be thought not to stand in need of refinement or studied ornament; but assuredly it is ever ready to adopt them, when they fall within its notice, as means allow; and this observation applies not only to manners, but to everything a christian (truly so in spirit) cultivates and gathers round him, however humble his social condition.

SAY, ye far-travelled clouds, far-seeing  
 hills—  
 Among the happiest-looking homes of men

Scattered all Britain over, through deep  
 glen,  
 On airy upland, and by forest rills,  
 And o'er wide plains cheered by the lark  
 that trills  
 His sky-born warblings—does aught meet  
 your ken  
 More fit to animate the Poet's pen,  
 Aught that more surely by its aspect fills  
 Pure minds with sinless envy, than the  
 Abode  
 Of the good Priest: who, faithful through  
 all hours  
 To his high charge, and truly serving God,  
 Has yet a heart and hand for trees and  
 flowers,  
 Enjoys the walks his predecessors trod,  
 Nor covets lineal rights in lands and towers.

## V

COMPOSED IN ROSLIN CHAPEL DURING A  
STORM

We were detained by incessant rain and storm at the small inn near Roslin Chapel, and I passed a great part of the day pacing to and fro in this beautiful structure, which, though not used for public service, is not allowed to go to ruin. Here this Sonnet was composed. If it has at all done justice to the feeling which the place and the storm raging without inspired, I was as a prisoner. A painter delineating the interior of the chapel and its minute features under such circumstances would have, no doubt, found his time agreeably shortened. But the movements of the mind must be more free while dealing with words than with lines and colours; such at least was then and has been on many other occasions my belief, and, as it is allotted to few to follow both arts with success, I am grateful to my own calling for this and a thousand other recommendations which are denied to that of the painter.

THE wind is now thy organist;—a clank  
 (We know not whence) ministers for a bell  
 To mark some change of service. As the  
 swell  
 Of music reached its height, and even when  
 sank  
 The notes, in prelude, ROSLIN! to a blank  
 Of silence, how it thrilled thy sumptuous  
 roof,  
 Pillars, and arches,—not in vain time-  
 proof,

Though Christian rites be wanting! From  
 what bank  
 Came those live herbs? by what hand were  
 they sown  
 Where dew falls not, where rain-drops seem  
 unknown?  
 Yet in the Temple they a friendly niche  
 Share with their sculptured fellows, that,  
 green-grown,  
 Copy their beauty more and more, and  
 preach,  
 Though mute, of all things blending into  
 one.

## VI

## THE TROSACHS

As recorded in my sister's Journal, I had first  
 seen the Trosachs in her and Coleridge's com-  
 pany. The sentiment that runs through this  
 Sonnet was natural to the season in which I  
 again saw this beautiful spot; but this and some  
 other sonnets that follow were coloured by the  
 remembrance of my recent visit to Sir Walter  
 Scott, and the melancholy errand on which he  
 was going.

THERE's not a nook within this solemn  
 Pass,  
 But were an apt confessional for One  
 Taught by his summer spent, his autumn  
 gone,  
 That Life is but a tale of morning grass  
 Withered at eve. From scenes of art which  
 chase  
 That thought away, turn, and with watchful  
 eyes  
 Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,  
 Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear  
 than glass  
 Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice  
 happy quest,  
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray  
 (October's workmanship to rival May)  
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast  
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught  
 lay,  
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!

## VII

THE pibroch's note, discountenanced or  
 mute;  
 The Roman kilt, degraded to a toy  
 Of quaint apparel for a half-spoilt boy;

The target mouldering like ungathered fruit;  
 The smoking steam-boat eager in pursuit,  
 As eagerly pursued; the umbrella spread  
 To weather-fend the Celtic herdsman's  
 head—

All speak of manners withering to the root,  
 And of old honours, too, and passions high:  
 Then may we ask, though pleased that  
 thought should range  
 Among the conquests of civility,  
 Survives imagination—to the change  
 Superior? Help to virtue does she give?  
 If not, O Mortals, better cease to live!

## VIII

## COMPOSED IN THE GLEN OF LOCH ETIVE

"That make the Patriot-spirit." It was mor-  
 tifying to have frequent occasions to observe the  
 bitter hatred of the lower orders of the High-  
 landers to their superiors; love of country seemed  
 to have passed into its opposite. Emigration was  
 the only relief looked to with hope.

"THIS Land of Rainbows spanning glens  
 whose walls,  
 Rock-built, are hung with rainbow-coloured  
 mists—  
 Of far-stretched Meres whose salt flood  
 never rests—  
 Of tuneful Caves and playful Waterfalls—  
 Of Mountains varying momentarily their  
 crests—  
 Proud be this Land! whose poorest huts  
 are halls  
 Where Fancy entertains becoming guests;  
 While native song the heroic Past recalls."  
 Thus, in the net of her own wishes caught,  
 The Muse exclaimed; but Story now must  
 hide  
 Her trophies, Fancy crouch; the course of  
 pride  
 Has been diverted, other lessons taught,  
 That make the Patriot-spirit bow her head  
 Where the all-conquering Roman feared to  
 tread.

## IX

## EAGLES

COMPOSED AT DUNOLIE CASTLE IN THE  
 BAY OF OBAN

"The last I saw was on the wing," off the pro-  
 montory of Fairhead, county of Antrim. I men-

tion this because, though my tour in Ireland with Mr. Marshall and his son was made many years ago, this allusion to the eagle is the only image supplied by it to the poetry I have since written. We travelled through that country in October, and to the shortness of the days and the speed with which we travelled (in a carriage and four) may be ascribed this want of notices, in my verse, of a country so interesting. The deficiency I am somewhat ashamed of, and it is the more remarkable as contrasted with my Scotch and Continental tours, of which are to be found in this volume so many memorials.

DISHONOUR'D Rock and Ruin! that, by law

Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jové embarr'd  
Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.  
Vex'd is he, and screams loud. The last

I saw  
Was on the wing; stooping, he struck with awe

Man, bird, and beast; then, with a consort  
paired,

From a bold headland, their loved aery's  
guard,

Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw  
Light from the fountain of the setting sun.  
Such was this Prisoner once; and, when  
his plumes

The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on,  
Then, for a moment, he, in spirit, resumes  
His rank 'mong freeborn creatures that live  
free,

His power, his beauty, and his majesty.

## X

## IN THE SOUND OF MULL

Touring late in the season in Scotland is an uncertain speculation. We were detained a week by rain at Bunaw on Loch Etive in a vain hope that the weather would clear up and allow me to show my daughter the beauties of Glencoe. Two days we were at the isle of Mull, on a visit to Major Campbell; but it rained incessantly, and we were obliged to give up our intention of going to Staffa. The rain pursued us to Tyndrum, where the Eleventh Sonnet was composed in a storm.

TRADITION, be thou mute! Oblivion, throw  
Thy veil in mercy o'er the records, hung  
Round strath and mountain, stamped by  
the ancient tongue

On rock and ruin darkening as we go,—  
Spots where a word, ghostlike, survives to  
show

What crimes from hate, or desperate love,  
have sprung;

From honour misconceived, or fancied  
wrong,

What feuds, not quenched but fed by  
mutual woe.

Yet, though a wild vindictive Race, un-  
tamed

By civil arts and labours of the pen,  
Could gentleness be scorned by those fierce  
Men,

Who, to spread wide the reverence they  
claimed

For patriarchal occupations, named  
Yon towering Peaks, "Shepherds of Etive  
Glen?"<sup>1</sup>

## XI

## SUGGESTED AT TYNDRUM IN A STORM

ENOUGH of garlands, of the Arcadian  
creek,

And all that Greece and Italy have sung  
Of Swains reposing myrtle groves among!  
*Ours* couch on naked rocks,—will cross a  
brook

Swoln with chill rains, nor ever cast a look  
This way or that, or give it even a thought  
More than by smoothest pathway may be  
brought

Into a vacant mind. Can written book  
Teach what *they* learn? Up, hardy  
Mountaineer!

And guide the Bard, ambitious to be One  
Of Nature's privy council, as thou art,  
On cloud-sequestered heights, that see and  
hear

To what dread Powers He delegates his part  
On earth, who works in the heaven of  
heavens, alone.

## XII

THE EARL OF BREADALBANE'S RUINED  
MANSION AND FAMILY BURIAL-PLACE,  
NEAR KILLIN

WELL sang the Bard who called the grave,  
in strains

<sup>1</sup> In Gaelic, *Buachail Eite*.

Thoughtful and sad, the "narrow house."  
 No style  
 Of fond sepulchral flattery can beguile  
 Grief of her sting; nor cheat, where he  
 detains  
 The sleeping dust, stern Death. How  
 reconcile  
 With truth, or with each other, decked  
 remains  
 Of a once warm Abode, and that *new*  
 Pile,  
 For the departed, built with curious pains  
 And mausolean pomp? Yet here they  
 stand  
 Together,—'mid trim walks and artful  
 bowers,  
 To be looked down upon by ancient hills,  
 That, for the living and the dead, demand  
 And prompt a harmony of genuine powers;  
 Concord that elevates the mind, and stills.

## XIII

REST AND BE THANKFUL!<sup>1</sup>

## AT THE HEAD OF GLENCREOE

DOUBLING and doubling with laborious  
 walk,  
 Who, that has gained at length the wished-  
 for Height,  
 This brief this simple wayside Call can  
 slight,  
 And rests not thankful? Whether cheered  
 by talk  
 With some loved friend, or by the unseen  
 hawk  
 Whistling to clouds and sky-born streams  
 that shine,  
 At the sun's outbreak, as with light divine,  
 Ere they descend to nourish root and  
 stalk  
 Of valley flowers. Nor, while the limbs  
 repose,  
 Will we forget that, as the fowl can  
 keep  
 Absolute stillness, poised aloft in air,  
 And fishes front, unmoved, the torrent's  
 sweep,—  
 So may the Soul, through powers that  
 Faith bestows,  
 Win rest, and ease, and peace, with bliss  
 that Angels share.

## XIV

## HIGHLAND HUT

SEE what gay wild flowers deck this earth-  
 built Cot,  
 Whose smoke, forth-issuing whence and  
 how it may,  
 Shines in the greeting of the sun's first ray  
 Like wreaths of vapour without stain or  
 blot.  
 The limpid mountain rill avoids it not;  
 And why shouldst thou?—If rightly trained  
 and bred,  
 Humanity is humble, finds no spot  
 Which her Heaven-guided feet refuse to  
 tread.  
 The walls are cracked, sunk is the flowery  
 roof,  
 Undressed the pathway leading to the door;  
 But love, as Nature loves, the lonely Poor;  
 Search, for their worth, some gentle heart  
 wrong-proof,  
 Meek, patient, kind, and, were its trials  
 fewer,  
 Belike less happy.—Stand no more aloof!<sup>1</sup>

## XV

## THE BROWNIE

Upon a small island, not far from the head of  
 Loch Lomond, are some remains of an ancient  
 building, which was for several years the abode  
 of a solitary Individual, one of the last survivors  
 of the clan of Macfarlane, once powerful in that  
 neighbourhood. Passing along the shore opposite  
 this island in the year 1814, the Author learned  
 these particulars, and that this person then living  
 there had acquired the appellation of "The  
 Brownie." See "The Brownie's Cell," p. 534, to  
 which the following is a sequel.

"How disappeared he?" Ask the newt  
 and toad;  
 Ask of his fellow-men, and they will tell  
 How he was found, cold as an icicle,  
 Under an arch of that forlorn abode;  
 Where he, unproped, and by the gathering  
 flood  
 Of years hemmed round, had dwelt, pre-  
 pared to try  
 Privation's worst extremities, and die  
 With no one near save the omnipresent God.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.



Verily so to live was an awful choice—  
A choice that wears the aspect of a doom ;  
But in the mould of mercy all is cast  
For Souls familiar with the eternal Voice ;  
And this forgotten Taper to the last  
Drove from itself, we trust, all frightful  
gloom.

## XVI

## TO THE PLANET VENUS, AN EVENING STAR

COMPOSED AT LOCH LOMOND

THOUGH joy attend Thee orient at the  
birth  
Of dawn, it cheers the lofty spirit most  
To watch thy course when Day-light, fled  
from earth,  
In the grey sky hath left his lingering  
Ghost,  
Perplexed as if between a splendour lost  
And splendour slowly mustering. Since  
the Sun,  
The absolute, the world-absorbing One,  
Relinquished half his empire to the host  
Emboldened by thy guidance, holy Star,  
Holy as princely—who that looks on thee,  
Touching, as now, in thy humility  
The mountain borders of this seat of care,  
Can question that thy countenance is bright,  
Celestial Power, as much with love as  
light?

## XVII

## BOTHWELL CASTLE

PASSED UNSKEN, ON ACCOUNT OF STORMY  
WEATHER

In my Sister's Journal is an account of Bothwell  
Castle as it appeared to us at that time.

IMMURED in Bothwell's towers, at times  
the Brave

(So beautiful is Clyde) forgot to mourn  
The liberty they lost at Bannockburn.  
Once on those steepes / roamed<sup>1</sup> at large,  
and have

In mind the landscape, as if still in sight ;  
The river glides, the woods before me wave ;  
Then why repine that now in vain I crave  
Needless renewal of an old delight ?  
Better to thank a dear and long-past day  
For joy its sunny hours were free to give

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Than blame the present, that our wish  
hath crost.

Memory, like sleep, hath powers which  
dreams obey,

Dreams, vivid dreams, that are not fugitive :  
How little that she cherishes is lost !

## XVIII

PICTURE OF DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN,  
AT HAMILTON PALACE

AMID a fertile region green with wood  
And fresh with rivers, well did it become  
The ducal Owner, in his palace-home  
To naturalise this tawny Lion brood ;  
Children of Art, that claim strange brother-  
hood

(Couched in their den) with those that  
roam at large  
Over the burning wilderness, and charge  
The wind with terror while they roar for  
food.

Satiate are *these*; and stilled to eye and  
ear ;

Hence, while we gaze, a more enduring  
fear !

Yet is the Prophet calm, nor would the  
cave

Daunt him—if his Companions, now be-  
drowsed

Outstretched and listless, were by hunger  
roused :

Man placed him here, and God, he knows,  
can save.

## XIX

## THE AVON

## A FEEDER OF THE ANNAN

"Yet is it one that other rivulets bear." There  
is the Shakspeare Avon, the Bristol Avon ; the  
one that flows by Salisbury, and a small river in  
Wales, I believe, bear the name ; Avon being in  
the ancient tongue the general name for river.

AVON—a precious, an immortal name !

Yet is it one that other rivulets bear

Like this unheard-of, and their channels  
wear

Like this contented, though unknown to  
Fame :

For great and sacred is the modest claim

Of Streams to Nature's love, where'er they  
flow;  
And ne'er did Genius slight them, as they  
go,  
Tree, flower, and green herb, feeding with-  
out blame.  
But Praise can waste her voice on work of  
tears,  
Anguish, and death: full oft where inno-  
cent blood  
Has mixed its current with the limpid flood,  
Her heaven-offending trophies Glory rears:  
Never for like distinction may the good  
Shrink from *thy* name, pure Rill, with un-  
pleased ears.

## XX

SUGGESTED BY A VIEW FROM AN EMINENCE  
IN INGLEWOOD FOREST

The extensive forest of Inglewood has been en-  
closed within my memory. I was well acquainted  
with it in its ancient state. The Hart's-horn tree  
mentioned in the next Sonnet was one of its re-  
markable objects, as well as another tree that  
grew upon an eminence not far from Penrith: it  
was single and conspicuous; and being of a round  
shape, though it was universally known to be a  
Sycamore, it was always called the "*Round  
Thorn*," so difficult is it to chain fancy down to  
fact.

THE forest huge of ancient Caledon  
Is but a name, no more is Inglewood,  
That swept from hill to hill, from flood to  
flood;  
On her last thorn the nightly moon has  
shone;  
Yet still, though inappropriate Wild be  
none,  
Fair parks spread wide where Adam Bell  
might deign  
With Clym o' the Clough, were they alive  
again,  
To kill for merry feast their venison.  
Nor wants the holy Abbot's gliding Shade  
His church with monumental wreck be-  
strown;  
The feudal Warrior-chief, a Ghost unlaid,  
Hath still his castle, though a skeleton,  
That he may watch by night, and lessons  
con  
Of power that perishes, and rights that fade.

## XXI

## HART'S-HORN TREE, NEAR PENRITH

HERE stood an Oak, that long had borne  
affixed  
To his huge trunk, or, with more subtle art,  
Among its withering topmost branches  
mixed,  
The palmy antlers of a hunted Hart,  
Whom the Dog Hercules pursued—his part  
Each desperately sustaining, till at last  
Both sank and died, the life-veins of the  
chased  
And chaser bursting here with one dire  
smart.  
Mutual the victory, mutual the defeat!  
High was the trophy hung with pitiless  
pride;  
Say, rather, with that generous sympathy  
That wants not, even in rudest breasts, a  
seat;  
And, for this feeling's sake, let no one chide  
Verse that would guard thy memory,  
HART'S-HORN TREE!<sup>1</sup>

## XXII

## FANCY AND TRADITION

THE Lovers took within this ancient grove  
Their last embrace; beside those crystal  
springs  
The Hermit saw the Angel spread his wings  
For instant flight; the Sage in yon alcove  
Sate musing; on that hill the Bard would  
rove,  
Not mute, where now the linnet only sings:  
Thus everywhere to truth Tradition clings,  
Or Fancy localises Powers we love.  
Were only History licensed to take note  
Of things gone by, her meagre monuments  
Would ill suffice for persons and events:  
There is an ampler page for man to quote,  
A readier book of manifold contents,  
Studied alike in palace and in cot.

## XXIII

## COUNTESS'S PILLAR

Suggested by the recollection of Julian's Bower  
and other traditions connected with this ancient  
forest.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

On the roadside between Penrith and Appleby, there stands a pillar with the following inscription:—

"This Pillar was erected, in the year 1656, by Anne Countess Dowager of Pembroke, &c., for a memorial of her last parting with her pious mother, Margaret Countess Dowager of Cumberland, on the 2d of April, 1616; in memory whereof she hath left an annuity of 4*l.* to be distributed to the poor of the parish of Brougham, every 2d day of April for ever, upon the stone table placed hard by. *Laus Deo!*"

WHILE the Poor gather round, till the end of time

May this bright flower of Charity display  
Its bloom, unfolding at the appointed day;  
Flower than the loveliest of the vernal prime  
Lovelier—transplanted from heaven's purest  
clime!

"Charity never faileth:" on that creed,  
More than on written testament or deed,  
The pious Lady built with hope sublime,  
Alms on this stone to be dealt out, *for ever!*  
"LAUS DEO." Many a Stranger passing  
by

Has with that Parting mixed a filial sigh,  
Blest its humane Memorial's fond endeavour;  
And, fastening on those lines an eye tear-glazed,

Has ended, though no Clerk, with "God  
be praised!"

## XXIV

## ROMAN ANTIQUITIES

FROM THE ROMAN STATION AT OLD  
PENRITH

How profitless the relics that we cull,  
Troubling the last holds of ambitious Rome,  
Unless they chasten fancies that presume  
Too high, or idle agitations lull!  
Of the world's flatteries if the brain be full,  
To have no seat for thought were better  
doom,

Like this old helmet, or the eyeless skull  
Of him who gloried in its nodding plume.  
Heaven out of view, our wishes what are  
they?

Our fond regrets tenacious in their grasp?  
The Sage's theory? the Poet's lay?  
Mere Fibulæ without a robe to clasp;  
Obsolete lamps, whose light no time recalls;  
Urns without ashes, tearless lacrymals!

## XXV

## APOLOGY FOR THE FOREGOING POEMS

No more: the end is sudden and abrupt,  
Abrupt—as without preconceived design  
Was the beginning; yet the several Lays  
Have moved in order, to each other bound  
By a continuous and acknowledged tie  
Though unapparent—like those Shapes  
distinct

That yet survive ensculptured on the walls  
Of palaces, or temples, 'mid the wreck  
Of famed Persepolis; each following each  
As might besem a stately embassy,  
In set array; these bearing in their hands  
Ensign of civil power, weapon of war,  
Or gift to be presented at the throne  
Of the Great King; and others, as they go  
In priestly vest, with holy offerings charged,  
Or leading victims drest for sacrifice.  
Nor will the Power we serve, that sacred  
Power,

The Spirit of humanity, disdain  
A ministration humble but sincere,  
That from a threshold loved by every Muse  
Its impulse took—that sorrow-stricken door,  
Whence, as a current from its fountain-head,  
Our thoughts have issued, and our feelings  
flowed,

Receiving, willingly or not, fresh strength  
From kindred sources; while around us  
sighed

(Life's three first seasons having passed  
away)

Leaf-scattering winds; and hoar-frost  
sprinklings fell

(Foretaste of winter) on the moorland  
heights;

And every day brought with it tidings new  
Of rash change, ominous for the public weal.  
Hence, if dejection has too oft encroached  
Upon that sweet and tender melancholy  
Which may itself be cherished and caressed  
More than enough; a fault so natural  
(Even with the young, the hopeful, or the  
gay)

For prompt forgiveness will not sue in vain.

## XXVI

## THE HIGHLAND BROACH

On ascending a hill that leads from Loch Awe  
towards Inverary, I fell into conversation with a

woman of the humbler class who wore one of those Highland Broaches. I talked with her about it; and upon parting with her, when I said with a kindness I truly felt—"May that Broach continue in your family through many generations to come, as you have already possessed it"—she thanked me most becomingly, and seemed not a little moved.

The exact resemblance which the old Broach (still in use, though rarely met with, among the Highlanders) bears to the Roman Fibula must strike every one, and concurs, with the plaid and kilt, to recall to mind the communication which the ancient Romans had with this remote country.

If to Tradition faith be due,  
And echoes from old verse speak true,  
Ere the meek Saint, Columba, bore  
Glad tidings to Iona's shore,  
No common light of nature blessed  
The mountain region of the west,  
A land where gentle manners ruled  
O'er men in dauntless virtues schooled,  
That raised, for centuries, a bar  
Impervious to the tide of war:  
Yet peaceful Arts did entrance gain  
Where haughty Force had striven in vain;  
And, 'mid the works of skillful hands,  
By wanderers brought from foreign lands  
And various climes, was not unknown  
The clasp that fixed the Roman Gown;  
The Fibula, whose shape, I ween,  
Still in the Highland Broach is seen,  
The silver Broach of massy frame,  
Worn at the breast of some grave Dame  
On road or path, or at the door  
Of fern-thatched hut on heathy moor:  
But delicate of yore its mould,  
And the material finest gold;  
As might beseem the fairest Fair,  
Whether she graced a royal chair,  
Or shed, within a vaulted hall,  
No fancied lustre on the wall  
Where shields of mighty heroes hung,  
While Fingal heard what Ossian sung.

The heroic Age expired—the slept  
Deep in its tomb:—the bramble crept  
O'er Fingal's hearth; the grassy sod  
Grew on the floors his sons had trod:  
Malvina! where art thou? Their state  
The noblest-born must abdicate;  
The fairest, while with fire and sword  
Come Spoilers—horde impelling horde,  
Must walk the sorrowing mountains, drest  
By ruder hands in homelier vest.

Yet still the female bosom lent,  
And loved to borrow, ornament;  
Still was its inner world a place  
Reached by the dews of heavenly grace;  
Still pity to this last retreat  
Clove fondly; to his favourite seat  
Love wound his way by soft approach,  
Beneath a massier Highland Broach.

When alternations came of rage  
Yet fiercer, in a darker age;  
And feuds, where, clan encountering clan,  
The weaker perished to a man;  
For maid and mother, when despair  
Might else have triumphed, baffling prayer,  
One small possession lacked not power,  
Provided in a calmer hour,  
To meet such need as might befall—  
Roof, raiment, bread, or burial:  
For woman, even of tears bereft,  
The hidden silver Broach was left.

As generations come and go  
Their arts, their customs, ebb and flow;  
Fate, fortune, sweep strong powers away,  
And feeble, of themselves, decay;  
What poor abodes the heir-loom hide,  
In which the castle once took pride!  
Tokens, once kept as boasted wealth,  
If saved at all, are saved by stealth.  
Lo! ships, from seas by nature barred,  
Mount along ways by man prepared;  
And in far-stretching vales, whose streams  
Seek other seas, their canvas gleams.  
Lo! busy towns spring up, on coasts  
Thronged yesterday by airy ghosts;  
Soon, like a lingering star forlorn  
Among the novelties of morn,  
While young delights on old encroach,  
Will vanish the last Highland Broach.

But when, from out their viewless bed,  
Like vapours, years have rolled and spread;  
And this poor verse, and worthier lays,  
Shall yield no light of love or praise;  
Then, by the spade, or cleaving plough,  
Or torrent from the mountain's brow,  
Or whirlwind, reckless what his might  
Entombs, or forces into light;  
Blind Chance, a volunteer ally,  
That oft befriends Antiquity,  
And clears Oblivion from reproach,  
May render back the Highland Broach.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> How much the Broach is sometimes prized by persons in humble stations may be gathered from an occurrence mentioned to me by a female friend. She had had an opportunity of benefiting

## DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS

Written at Rydal Mount.

"Not to the earth confined,  
Ascend to heaven."

WHERE will they stop, those breathing  
Powers,

The Spirits of the new-born flowers?  
They wander with the breeze, they wind  
Where'er the streams a passage find;  
Up from their native ground they rise  
In mute aerial harmonies;  
From humble violet—modest thyme—  
Exhaled, the essential odours climb,  
As if no space below the sky  
Their subtle flight could satisfy:  
Heaven will not tax our thoughts with pride  
If like ambition be *their* guide.

Roused by this kindest of May-showers,  
The spirit-quickener of the flowers,  
That with moist virtue softly cleaves  
The buds, and freshens the young leaves,  
The birds pour forth their souls in notes  
Of rapture from a thousand throats—  
Here checked by too impetuous haste,  
While there the music runs to waste,  
With bounty more and more enlarged,  
Till the whole air is overcharged;  
Give ear, O Man! to their appeal  
And thirst for no inferior zeal,  
Thou, who canst *think*, as well as feel.

Mount from the earth; aspire! aspire!  
So pleads the town's cathedral quire,  
In strains that from their solemn height  
Sink, to attain a loftier flight;  
While incense from the altar breathes  
Rich fragrance in embodied wreaths;  
Or, flung from swinging censer, shrouds  
The taper-lights, and curls in clouds  
Around angelic Forms, the still  
Creation of the painter's skill,  
That on the service wait concealed  
One moment, and the next revealed  
—Cast off your bonds, awake, arise,

a poor old woman in her own hut, who, wishing to make a return, said to her daughter, in Erse, in a tone of plaintive earnestness, "I would give anything I have, but I *hope* she does not wish for my Broach!" and, uttering these words, she put her hand upon the Broach which fastened her kerchief, and which, she imagined, had attracted the eye of her benefactress.

And for no transient ecstasies!  
What else can mean the visual plea  
Of still or moving imagery—  
The iterated summons loud,  
Not wasted on the attendant crowd,  
Nor wholly lost upon the throng  
Hurrying the busy streets along?  
Alas! the sanctities combined  
By art to unsensualise the mind,  
Decay and languish; or, as creeds  
And humours change, are spurned like  
weeds:

The priests are from their altars thrust;  
Temples are levelled with the dust;  
And solemn rites and awful forms  
Founder amid fanatic storms.  
Yet evermore, through years renewed  
In undisturbed vicissitude  
Of seasons balancing their flight  
On the swift wings of day and night,  
Kind Nature keeps a heavenly door  
Wide open for the scattered Poor.  
Where flower-breathed incense to the skies  
Is wafted in mute harmonies;  
And ground fresh-cloven by the plough  
Is fragrant with a humbler vow;  
Where birds and brooks from leafy dells  
Chime forth unwearied canticles,  
And vapours magnify and spread  
The glory of the sun's bright head—  
Still constant in her worship, still  
Conforming to the eternal Will,  
Whether men sow or reap the fields,  
Divine monition Nature yields,  
That not by bread alone we live,  
Or what a hand of flesh can give;  
That every day should leave some part  
Free for a sabbath of the heart:  
So shall the seventh be truly blest,  
From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.

1832.

## "CALM IS THE FRAGRANT AIR"

CALM is the fragrant air, and loth to lose  
Day's grateful warmth, tho' moist with falling  
dews.

Look for the stars, you'll say that there are  
none;

Look up a second time, and, one by one,  
You mark them twinkling out with silvery  
light,

And wonder how they could elude the sight!

The birds, of late so noisy in their bowers,  
Warbled a while with faint and fainter  
powers,

But now are silent as the dim-seen flowers :  
Nor does the village Church-clock's iron  
tone

The time's and season's influence disown ;  
Nine beats distinctly to each other bound  
In drowsy sequence—how unlike the sound  
That, in rough winter, oft inflicts a fear  
On fireside listeners, doubting what they  
hear !

The shepherd, bent on rising with the sun,  
Had closed his door before the day was  
done,

And now with thankful heart to bed doth  
creep,

And joins his little children in their sleep.  
The bat, lured forth where trees the lane  
o'ershade,

Flits and reflies along the close arcade ;  
The busy dor-hawk chases the white moth  
With burring note, which Industry and  
Sloth

Might both be pleased with, for it suits  
them both.

A stream is heard—I see it not, but know  
By its soft music whence the waters flow :  
Wheels and the tread of hoofs are heard no  
more ;

One boat there was, but it will touch the  
shore

With the next dipping of its slackened oar ;  
Faint sound, that, for the gayest of the gay,  
Might give to serious thought a moment's  
sway,

As a last token of man's toilsome day !  
1832.

### RURAL ILLUSIONS

Written at Rydal Mount. Observed a hundred  
times in the grounds there.

SYLPH was it? or a Bird more bright  
Than those of fabulous stock?

A second darted by;—and lo !  
Another of the flock,

Through sunshine flitting from the bough  
To nestle in the rock.

Transient deception ! a gay freak  
Of April's mimicries !

Those brilliant strangers, hailed with joy  
Among the budding trees,

Proved last year's leaves, pushed from the  
spray  
To frolic on the breeze.

Maternal Flora ! show thy face,  
And let thy hand be seen,  
Thy hand here sprinkling tiny flowers,  
That, as they touch the green,  
Take root (so seems it) and look up  
In honour of their Queen.

Yet, sooth, those little starry specks,  
That not in vain aspired

To be confounded with live growths,  
Most dainty, most admired,  
Were only blossoms dropt from twigs  
Of their own offspring tired.

Not such the World's illusive shows ;  
*Her* wingless flutterings,  
Her blossoms which, though shed, outbrave  
The floweret as it springs,  
For the undeceived, smile as they may,  
Are melancholy things :  
But gentle Nature plays her part .  
With ever-varying wiles,  
And transient feignings with plain truth  
So well she reconciles,  
That those fond Idlers most are pleased  
Whom oftenest she beguiles. 1832.

### LOVING AND LIKING

#### IRREGULAR VERSES

#### ADDRESSED TO A CHILD

(BY MY SISTER)

Written at Rydal Mount. It arose, I believe,  
out of a casual expression of one of Mr. Swin-  
burne's children.

THERE's more in words than I can teach :  
Yet listen, Child !—I would not preach ;  
But only give some plain directions  
To guide your speech and your affections.  
Say not you *love* a roasted fowl,  
But you may love a screaming owl.  
And, if you can, the unwieldy toad  
That crawls from his secure abode  
Within the mossy garden wall  
When evening dews begin to fall.  
Oh mark the beauty of his eye :  
What wonders in that circle lie !  
So clear, so bright, our fathers said  
He wears a jewel in his head !

And when, upon some showery day,  
 Into a path or public way  
 A frog leaps out from bordering grass,  
 Startling the timid as they pass,  
 Do you observe him, and endeavour  
 To take the intruder into favour;  
 Learning from him to find a reason  
 For a light heart in a dull season.  
 And you may love him in the pool,  
 That is for him a happy school,  
 In which he swims as taught by nature,  
 Fit pattern for a human creature,  
 Glancing amid the water bright,  
 And sending upward sparkling light.

Nor blush if o'er your heart be stealing  
 A love for things that have no feeling:  
 The spring's first rose by you espied,  
 May fill your breast with joyful pride;  
 And you may love the strawberry-flower,  
 And love the strawberry in its bower;  
 But when the fruit, so often praised  
 For beauty, to your lip is raised,  
 Say not you *love* the delicate treat,  
 But *like* it, enjoy it, and thankfully eat.

Long may you love your pensioner mouse,  
 Though one of a tribe that torment the  
 house:

Nor dislike for her cruel sport the cat,  
 Deadly foe both of mouse and rat;  
 Remember she follows the law of her kind,  
 And Instinct is neither wayward nor blind.  
 Then think of her beautiful gliding form,  
 Her tread that would scarcely crush a  
 worm,

And her soothing song by the winter fire,  
 Soft as the dying throb of the lyre.

I would not circumscribe your love:  
 It may soar with the eagle and brood with  
 the dove,

May pierce the earth with the patient mole,  
 Or track the hedgehog to his hole.  
 Loving and liking are the solace of life,  
 Rock the cradle of joy, smooth the death-  
 bed of strife.

You love your father and your mother,  
 Your grown-up and your baby brother;  
 You love your sister, and your friends,  
 And countless blessings which God sends:  
 And while these right affections play,  
 You *live* each moment of your day;  
 They lead you on to full content,  
 And likings fresh and innocent,  
 That store the mind, the memory feed,  
 And prompt to many a gentle deed:

But *likings* come, and pass away;  
 'Tis *love* that remains till our latest day:  
 Our heavenward guide is holy love,  
 And will be our bliss with saints above.  
 1832.

## UPON THE LATE GENERAL FAST

MARCH 1832

RELUCTANT call it was; the rite delayed;  
 And in the Senate some there were who  
 doffed

The last of their humanity, and scoffed  
 At providential judgments, undismayed  
 By their own daring. But the People  
 prayed

As with one voice; their flinty heart grew  
 soft

With penitential sorrow, and aloft  
 Their spirit mounted, crying, "God us  
 aid!"

Oh that with aspirations more intense,  
 Chastised by self-abasement more pro-  
 found,

This People, once so happy, so renowned  
 For liberty, would seek from God defence  
 Against far heavier ill, the pestilence  
 Of revolution, impiously unbound!

## FILIAL PIETY

ON THE WAYSIDE BETWEEN PRESTON  
 AND LIVERPOOL

This was communicated to me by a coachman  
 at whose side I sat while he was driving. In  
 the course of my many coach rambles and  
 journeys, which, during the daytime always and  
 often in the night, were taken on the outside of  
 the coach, I had good and frequent opportunities  
 of learning the characteristics of this class of  
 men. One remark I made that is worth record-  
 ing; that whenever I had occasion especially to  
 notice their well-ordered, respectful, and kind be-  
 haviour to women, of whatever age, I found them,  
 I may say almost always, to be married men.

UNTOUCHED through all severity of cold;  
 Inviolatè, whate'er the cottage hearth  
 Might need for comfort, or for festal mirth;  
 That Pile of Turf is half a century old:  
 Yes, Traveller! fifty winters have been  
 told

Since suddenly the dart of death went forth  
'Gainst him who raised it,—his last work  
on earth:

Thence has it, with the Son, so strong a  
hold

Upon his Father's memory, that his hands,  
Through reverence, touch it only to repair  
Its waste.—Though crumbling with each  
breath of air,

In annual renovation thus it stands—  
Rude Mausoleum! but wrens nestle there,  
And red-breasts warble when sweet sounds  
are rare. 1832.

TO B. R. HAYDON, ON SEEING HIS  
PICTURE OF NAPOLEON BUONA-  
PARTE ON THE ISLAND OF ST.  
HELENA

This Sonnet, though said to be written on see-  
ing the Portrait of Napoleon, was, in fact, com-  
posed some time after, extempore, in the wood at  
Rydal Mount.

HAYDON! let worthier judges praise the  
skill

Here by thy pencil shown in truth of lines  
And charm of colours; / applaud those  
signs

Of thought, that give the true poetic thrill;  
That unencumbered whole of blank and  
still

Sky without cloud—ocean without a wave;  
And the one Man that laboured to enslave  
The World, sole-standing high on the bare  
hill—

Back turned, arms folded, the unapparent  
face

Tinged, we may fancy, in this dreary  
place,

With light reflected from the invisible sun  
Set, like his fortunes; but not set for aye  
Like them. The unguilty Power pursues  
his way,

And before him doth dawn perpetual run.  
1832.

"IF THOU INDEED DERIVE THY  
LIGHT FROM HEAVEN"

These verses were written some time after we  
had become residents at Rydal Mount, and I

will take occasion from them to observe upon the  
beauty of that situation, as being backed and  
flanked by lofty fells, which bring the heavenly  
bodies to touch, as it were, the earth upon the  
mountain-tops, while the prospect in front lies  
open to a length of level valley, the extended  
lake, and a terminating ridge of low hills; so that  
it gives an opportunity to the inhabitants of the  
place of noticing the stars in both the positions  
here alluded to, namely, on the tops of the moun-  
tains, and as winter-lamps at a distance among  
the leafless trees.

If thou indeed derive thy light from  
Heaven,

Then, to the measure of that heaven-born  
light,

Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be con-  
tent:—

The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,  
And they that from the zenith dart their  
beams,

(Visible though they be to half the earth,  
Though half a sphere be conscious of their  
brightness)

Are yet of no diviner origin,  
No purer essence, than the one that burns,  
Like an untended watch-fire on the ridge  
Of some dark mountain; or than those  
which seem

Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter  
lamps,

Among the branches of the leafless trees.

All are the undying offspring of one Sire:  
Then, to the measure of the light vouch-  
safed,

Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content.  
1832.

A WREN'S NEST

Written at Rydal Mount. This nest was  
built, as described, in a tree that grows near the  
pool in Dora's field next the Rydal Mount  
garden.

AMONG the dwellings framed by birds  
In field or forest with nice care,  
Is none that with the little Wren's  
In snugness may compare.

No door the tenement requires,  
And seldom needs a laboured roof;  
Yet is it to the fiercest sun  
Impervious, and storm-proof.



So warm, so beautiful withal,  
In perfect fitness for its aim,  
That to the Kind by special grace  
Their instinct surely came.

And when for their abodes they seek  
An opportune recess,  
The hermit has no finer eye  
For shadowy quietness.

These find, 'mid ivied abbey-walls,  
A canopy in some still nook;  
Others are pent-housed by a brae  
That overhangs a brook.

There to the brooding bird her mate  
Warbles by fits his low clear song;  
And by the busy streamlet both  
Are sung to all day long.

Or in sequestered lanes they build,  
Where, till the fitting bird's return,  
Her eggs within the nest repose,  
Like relics in an urn.

But still, where general choice is good,  
There is a better and a best;  
And, among fairest objects, some  
Are fairer than the rest;

This, one of those small builders proved  
In a green covert, where, from out  
The forehead of a pollard oak,  
The leafy antlers sprout;

For She who planned the mossy lodge,  
Mistrusting her evasive skill,  
Had to a Primrose looked for aid  
Her wishes to fulfil.

High on the trunk's projecting brow,  
And fixed an infant's span above  
The budding flowers, peeped forth the nest  
The prettiest of the grove!

The treasure proudly did I show  
To some whose minds without disdain  
Can turn to little things; but once  
Looked up for it in vain:

'Tis gone—a ruthless spoiler's prey,  
Who heeds not beauty, love, or song,  
'Tis gone! (so seemed it) and we grieved  
Indignant at the wrong.

Just three days after, passing by  
In clearer light the moss-built cell  
I saw, espied its shaded mouth;  
And felt that all was well.

The Primrose for a veil had spread  
The largest of her upright leaves;  
And thus, for purposes benign,  
A simple flower deceives.

Concealed from friends who might disturb  
Thy quiet with no ill intent,  
Secure from evil eyes and hands  
On barbarous plunder bent,

Rest, Mother-bird! and when thy young  
Take flight, and thou art free to roam,  
When withered is the guardian Flower,  
And empty thy late home,

Think how ye prospered, thou and thine,  
Amid the unviolated grove  
Housed near the growing Primrose-tuft  
In foresight, or in love. 1833.

TO ———

UPON THE BIRTH OF HER FIRST-BORN  
CHILD, MARCH 1833

Written at Moresby near Whitehaven, when I  
was on a visit to my son, then Incumbent of that  
small living. While I am dictating these notes  
to my friend, Miss Fenwick, January 24, 1843, the  
child upon whose birth these verses were written  
is under my roof, and is of a disposition so pro-  
mising that the wishes and prayers and prophecies  
which I then breathed forth in verse are, through  
God's mercy, likely to be realised.

"Tum porro puer, ut sævis projectus ab undis  
Navita, nudus humi jacet, etc."—*Lucretius*.

LIKE a shipwrecked Sailor tost  
By rough waves on a perilous coast,  
Lies the Babe, in helplessness  
And in tenderest nakedness,  
Flung by labouring nature forth  
Upon the mercies of the earth.  
Can its eyes beseech?—no more  
Than the hands are free to implore:  
Voice but serves for one brief cry;  
Plaint was it? or prophecy  
Of sorrow that will surely come?  
Omen of man's grievous doom!

But, O Mother ! by the close  
 Duly granted to thy throes ;  
 By the silent thanks, now tending  
 Incense-like to Heaven, descending  
 Now to mingle and to move  
 With the gush of earthly love,  
 As a debt to that frail Creature,  
 Instrument of struggling Nature  
 For the blissful calm, the peace  
 Known but to this *one* release—  
 Can the pitying spirit doubt  
 That for human-kind springs out  
 From the penalty a sense  
 Of more than mortal recompence ?

As a floating summer cloud,  
 Though of gorgeous drapery proud,  
 To the sun-burnt traveller,  
 Or the stooping labourer,  
 Oft-times makes its bounty known  
 By its shadow round him thrown ;  
 So, by chequerings of sad cheer,  
 Heavenly Guardians, brooding near,  
 Of their presence tell—too bright  
 Haply for corporeal sight !  
 Ministers of grace divine  
 Feelingly their brows incline  
 O'er this seeming Castaway  
 Breathing, in the light of day,  
 Something like the faintest breath  
 That has power to baffle death—  
 Beautiful, while very weakness  
 Captivates like passive meekness.

And, sweet Mother ! under warrant  
 Of the universal Parent,  
 Who repays in season due  
 Them who have, like thee, been true  
 To the filial chain let down  
 From his everlasting throne,  
 Angels hovering round thy couch,  
 With their softest whispers vouch,  
 That—whatever griefs may fret,  
 Cares entangle, sins beset,  
 This thy First-born, and with tears  
 Stain her cheek in future years—  
 Heavenly succour, not denied  
 To the babe, whate'er betide,  
 Will to the woman be supplied !

Mother ! blest be thy calm ease ;  
 Blest the starry promises,—  
 And the firmament benign  
 Hallowed be it, where they shine !  
 Yes, for them whose souls have scope  
 Ample for a wingèd hope,  
 And can earthward bend an ear

For needful listening, pledge is here,  
 That, if thy new-born Charge shall tread  
 In thy footsteps, and be led  
 By that other Guide, whose light  
 Of manly virtues, mildly bright,  
 Gave him first the wished-for part  
 In thy gentle virgin heart ;  
 Then, amid the storms of life  
 Presigned by that dread strife  
 Whence ye have escaped together,  
 She may look for serene weather ;  
 In all trials sure to find  
 Comfort for a faithful mind ;  
 Kindlier issues, holier rest,  
 Than even now await her prest,  
 Conscious Nursling, to thy breast !

## THE WARNING

### A SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING

These lines were composed during the fever spread through the Nation by the Reform Bill. As the motives which led to this measure, and the good or evil which has attended or has risen from it, will be duly appreciated by future historians, there is no call for dwelling on the subject in this place. I will content myself with saying that the then condition of the people's mind is not, in these verses, exaggerated.

LIST, the winds of March are blowing ;  
 Her ground-flowers shrink, afraid of showing

Their meek heads to the nipping air,  
 Which ye feel not, happy pair !  
 Sunk into a kindly sleep.  
 We, meanwhile, our hope will keep ;  
 And if Time leagued with adverse Change  
 (Too busy fear !) shall cross its range,  
 Whatsoever check they bring,  
 Anxious duty hindering,  
 To like hope our prayers will cling.

Thus, while the ruminating spirit feeds  
 Upon the events of home as life proceeds,  
 Affections pure and holy in their source  
 Gain a fresh impulse, run a livelier course ;  
 Hopes that within the Father's heart pre-  
 vail,  
 Are in the experienced Grandsire's slow to  
 fail ;  
 And if the harp pleased his gay youth, it  
 rings  
 To his grave touch with no unready strings,

While thoughts press on, and feelings  
overflow,  
And quick words round him fall like flakes  
of snow.

Thanks to the Powers that yet maintain  
their sway,  
And have renewed the tributary Lay.  
Truths of the heart flock in with eager pace,  
And FANCY greets them with a fond embrace;

Swift as the rising sun his beams extends  
She shoots the tidings forth to distant  
friends;

Their gifts she hails (deemed precious, as  
they prove

For the unconscious Babe so prompt a  
love!)—

But from this peaceful centre of delight  
Vague sympathies have urged her to take  
flight:

Rapt into upper regions, like the bee  
That sucks from mountain heath her honey  
fee;

Or, like the warbling lark intent to shroud  
His head in sunbeams or a bowery cloud,  
She soars—and here and there her pinions  
rest

On proud towers, like this humble cottage,  
blest

With a new visitant, an infant guest—  
Towers where red streamers flout the breezy  
sky

In pomp foreseen by her creative eye,  
When feasts shall crowd the hall, and  
steeple bells

Glad proclamation make, and heights and  
dells

Catch the blithe music as it sinks and  
swells,

And harboured ships, whose pride is on the  
sea,

Shall hoist their topmost flags in sign of  
glee,

Honouring the hope of noble ancestry.

But who (though neither reckoning ills  
assigned

By Nature, nor reviewing in the mind  
The track that was, and is, and must be,  
worn

With weary feet by all of woman born)—  
Shall *now* by such a gift with joy be moved,

Nor feel the fulness of that joy reproved?  
Not He, whose last faint memory will  
command

The truth that Britain was his native land;  
Whose infant soul was tutored to confide  
In the cleansed faith for which her martyrs  
died;

Whose boyish ear the voice of her renown  
With rapture thrilled; whose Youth re-  
vered the crown

Of Saxon liberty that Alfred wore,  
Alfred, dear Babe, thy great Progenitor!  
—Not He, who from her mellowed practice  
drew

His social sense of just, and fair, and true;  
And saw, thereafter, on the soil of France  
Rash Polity begin her maniac dance,  
Foundations broken up, the deeps run wild,  
Nor grieved to see (himself not unbe-  
gued)—

Woke from the dream, the dreamer to  
upbraid,

And learn how sanguine expectations fade  
When novel trusts by folly are betrayed,—  
To see Presumption, turning pale, refrain  
From further havoc, but repent in vain,—  
Good aims lie down, and perish in the road  
Where guilt had urged them on with  
ceaseless goad,

Proofs thickening round her that on public  
ends

Domestic virtue vitally depends,  
That civic strife can turn the happiest  
hearth

Into a grievous sore of self-tormenting  
earth.

Can such a One, dear Babe! though  
glad and proud

To welcome thee, repel the fears that crowd  
Into his English breast, and spare to quake  
Less for his own than for thy innocent  
sake?

Too late—or, should the providence of God  
Lead, through dark ways by sin and sorrow  
trod,

Justice and peace to a secure abode,  
Too soon—thou com'st into this breathing  
world;

Ensigns of mimic outrage are unfurled.  
Who shall preserve or prop the tottering  
Realm?

What hand suffice to govern the state-helm?  
If, in the aims of men, the surest test  
Of good or bad (what'er be sought for or  
profest)

Lie in the means required, or ways ordained,  
For compassing the end, else never gained;

Yet governors and governed both are blind  
To this plain truth, or fling it to the wind;  
If to expedience principle must bow;  
Past, future, shrinking up beneath the  
incumbent Now;

If cowardly concession still must feed  
The thirst for power in men who ne'er  
concede;

Nor turn aside, unless to shape a way  
For domination at some riper day;  
If generous Loyalty must stand in awe  
Of subtle Treason, in his mask of law,  
Or with bravado insolent and hard,  
Provoking punishment, to win reward;  
If office help the factious to conspire,  
And they who *should* extinguish, fan the  
fire—

Then, will the sceptre be a straw, the  
crown

Sit loosely, like the thistle's crest of down;  
To be blown off at will, by Power that  
spares it

In cunning patience, from the head that  
wears it.

Lost people, trained to theoretic feud !  
Lost above all, ye labouring multitude !  
Bewildered whether ye, by slanderous  
tongues

Deceived, mistake calamities for wrongs ;  
And over fancied usurpations brood,  
Oft snapping at revenge in sullen mood ;  
Or, from long stress of real injuries, fly  
To desperation for a remedy ;

In bursts of outrage spread your judg-  
ments wide,

And to your wrath cry out, " Be thou our  
guide ; "

Or, bound by oaths, come forth to tread  
earth's floor

In marshalled thousands, darkening street  
and moor

With the worst shape mock-patience ever  
wore ;

Or, to the giddy top of self-esteem  
By Flatterers carried, mount into a dream  
Of boundless suffrage, at whose sage behest  
Justice shall rule, disorder be suppress,  
And every man sit down as Plenty's Guest !  
—Oh for a bridle bitted with remorse  
To stop your Leaders in their headstrong  
course !

Oh may the Almighty scatter with his grace  
These mists, and lead you to a safer place,  
By paths no human wisdom can foretrace !

May He pour round you, from worlds far  
above

Man's feverish passions, his pure light of  
love,

That quietly restores the natural mien  
To hope, and makes truth willing to be seen !

*Else* shall your blood-stained hands in  
frenzy reap

Fields gaily sown when promises were  
cheap.—

Why is the Past belied with wicked art,  
The Future made to play so false a part,  
Among a people famed for strength of mind,  
Foremost in freedom, noblest of mankind ?  
We act as if we joyed in the sad tune  
Storms make in rising, valued in the moon  
Nought but her changes. Thus, ungrateful  
Nation !

If thou persist, and scorning moderation,  
Spread for thyself the snares of tribulation,  
Whom, then, shall meekness guard ? What  
saving skill

Lie in forbearance, strength in standing  
still ?

—Soon shall the widow (for the speed of  
Time

Nought equals when the hours are winged  
with crime)

Widow, or wife, implore on tremulous knee,  
From him who judged her lord, a like  
decree ;

The skies will weep o'er old men desolate :  
Ye little-ones ! Earth shudders at your fate,  
Outcasts and homeless orphans—

But turn, my Soul, and from the sleeping  
pair

Learn thou the beauty of omniscient care !  
Be strong in faith, bid anxious thoughts  
lie still ;

Seek for the good and cherish it—the ill  
Oppose, or bear with a submissive will.

1833.

# "IF THIS GREAT WORLD OF JOY AND PAIN"

If this great world of joy and pain  
Revolve in one sure track ;

If freedom, set, will rise again,  
And virtue, flown, come back ;

Woe to the purblind crew who fill  
The heart with each day's care ;

Nor gain, from past or future, skill  
To bear, and to forbear ! 1833.

ON A HIGH PART OF THE COAST  
OF CUMBERLAND

Easter Sunday, April 7

## THE AUTHOR'S SIXTH-THIRD BIRTHDAY

The lines were composed on the road between Moresby and Whitehaven while I was on a visit to my son, then rector of the former place. This and some other Voluntaries originated in the concluding lines of the last paragraph of this poem. With this coast I have been familiar from my earliest childhood, and remember being struck for the first time by the town and port of Whitehaven, and the white waves breaking against its quays and piers, as the whole came into view from the top of the high ground down which the road (it has since been altered) then descended abruptly. My sister, when she first heard the voice of the sea from this point, and beheld the scene spread before her, burst into tears. Our family then lived at Cockermouth, and this fact was often mentioned among us as indicating the sensibility for which she was so remarkable.

THE Sun, that seemed so mildly to retire,  
Flung back from distant climes a streaming  
fire,  
Whose blaze is now subdued to tender  
gleams,  
Prelude of night's approach with soothing  
dreams.  
Look round;—of all the clouds not one is  
moving;  
'Tis the still hour of thinking, feeling,  
loving,  
Silent, and steadfast as the vaulted sky,  
The boundless plain of waters seems to  
lie:—  
Comes that low sound from breezes rustling  
o'er  
The grass-crowned headland that conceals  
the shore?  
No; 'tis the earth-voice of the mighty sea,  
Whispering how meek and gentle he *can* be!  
Thou Power supreme! who, arming to  
rebuke  
Offenders, dost put off the gracious look,  
And clothe thyself with terrors like the  
flood  
Of ocean roused into its fiercest mood,  
Whatever discipline thy Will ordain  
For the brief course that must for me  
remain;

Teach me with quick-eared spirit to rejoice  
In admonitions of thy softest voice!  
Whate'er the path these mortal feet may  
trace,  
Breathe through my soul the blessing of  
thy grace,  
Glad, through a perfect love, a faith sincere  
Drawn from the wisdom that begins with  
fear,  
Glad to expand; and, for a season, free  
From finite cares, to rest absorbed in Thee!  
1833.

## (BY THE SEASIDE)

THE sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to  
rest,  
And the wild storm hath somewhere found  
a nest;  
Air slumbers—wave with wave no longer  
strives,  
Only a heaving of the deep survives,  
A tell-tale motion! soon will it be laid,  
And by the tide alone the water swayed.  
Stealthy withdrawals, interminglings mild  
Of light with shade in beauty reconciled—  
Such is the prospect far as sight can range,  
The soothing recompence, the welcome  
change.  
Where, now, the ships that drove before  
the blast,  
Threatened by angry breakers as they  
passed;  
And by a train of flying clouds bemocked;  
Or, in the hollow surge, at anchor rocked  
As on a bed of death? Some lodge in  
peace,  
Saved by His care who bade the tempest  
cease;  
And some, too heedless of past danger,  
court  
Fresh gales to waft them to the far-off port  
But near, or hanging sea and sky between,  
Not one of all those winged powers is seen,  
Seen in her course, nor 'mid this quiet  
beard;  
Yet oh! how gladly would the air be stirred  
By some acknowledgment of thanks and  
praise,  
Soft in its temper as those vesper lays  
Sung to the Virgin while accordant oars  
Urge the slow bark along Calabrian shores;  
A sea-born service through the mountains felt

Till into one loved vision all things melt :  
Or like those hymns that soothe with graver  
sound

The gulfy coast of Norway iron-bound ;  
And, from the wide and open Baltic, rise  
With punctual care, Lutheran harmonies.  
Hush, not a voice is here ! but why repine,  
Now when the star of eve comes forth to  
shine

On British waters with that look benign ?  
Ye mariners, that plough your onward way,  
Or in the haven rest, or sheltering bay,  
May silent thanks at least to God be given  
With a full heart ; " our thoughts are *heard*  
in heaven." 1833.

## POEMS

### COMPOSED OR SUGGESTED DURING A TOUR IN THE SUMMER OF 1833

My companions were H. C. Robinson and my  
son John.

Having been prevented by the lateness of the  
season, in 1831, from visiting Staffa and Iona, the  
author made these the principal objects of a short  
tour in the summer of 1833, of which the follow-  
ing series of poems is a Memorial. The course  
pursued was down the Cumberland river Derwent,  
and to Whitehaven ; thence (by the Isle of Man,  
where a few days were passed) up the Frith of  
Clyde to Greenock, then to Oban, Staffa, Iona ;  
and back towards England, by Loch Awe, Inver-  
ary, Loch Gail-head, Greenock, and through  
parts of Renfrewshire, Ayrshire, and Dumfries-  
shire to Carlisle, and thence up the river Eden,  
and homewards by Ullswater.

#### I

ADIEU, Rydalian Laurels ! that have grown  
And spread as if ye knew that days might  
come

When ye would shelter in a happy home,  
On this fair Mount, a Poet of your own,  
One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic crown  
To sue the God ; but, haunting your green  
shade

All seasons through, is humbly pleased to  
braid

Ground-flowers, beneath your guardianship,  
self-sown.

Farewell ! no Minstrels now with harp new-  
strung

For summer wandering quit their household  
bowers ;

Yet not for this wants Poesy a tongue  
To cheer the Itinerant on whom she pours  
Her spirit, while he crosses lonely moors,  
Or musing sits forsaken halls among.

#### II

WHY should the Enthusiast, journeying  
through this Isle

Repine as if his hour were come too late ?  
Not unprotected in her mouldering state,  
Antiquity salutes him with a smile,  
'Mid fruitful fields that ring with jocund toil,  
And pleasure-grounds where Taste, refined  
Co-mate

Of Truth and Beauty, strives to imitate,  
Far as she may, primeval Nature's style.  
Fair land ! by Time's parental love made  
free,

By Social Order's watchful arms embraced ;  
With unexampled union meet in thee,  
For eye and mind, the present and the  
past ;

With golden prospect for futurity,  
If that be revered which ought to last.

#### III

THEY called Thee MERRY ENGLAND, in  
old time ;

A happy people won for thee that name  
With envy heard in many a distant clime ;  
And, spite of change, for me thou keep'st  
the same

Endearing title, a responsive chime  
To the heart's fond belief ; though some  
there are

Whose sterner judgments deem that word  
a snare

For inattentive Fancy, like the lime  
Which foolish birds are caught with. Can,  
I ask,

This face of rural beauty be a mask  
For discontent, and poverty, and crime ;  
These spreading towns a cloak for lawless  
will ?

Forbid it, Heaven !—and MERRY ENGLAND  
still

Shall be thy rightful name, in prose and  
rhyme !

## IV

TO THE RIVER GRETA, NEAR KESWICK  
GRETA, what fearful listening! when huge  
stones

Rumble along thy bed, block after block:  
Or, whirling with reiterated shock,  
Combat, while darkness aggravates the  
groans:

But if thou (like Cocytus from the moans  
Heard on his rueful margin) thence wert  
named

The Mourner, thy true nature was defamed,  
And the habitual murmur that atones  
For thy worst rage, forgotten.<sup>1</sup> Oft as  
Spring

Decks, on thy sinuous banks, her thousand  
thrones

Seats of glad instinct and love's carolling,  
The concert, for the happy, then may vie  
With liveliest peals of birth-day harmony:  
To a grieved heart, the notes are benisons.

## V

## TO THE RIVER DERWENT

AMONG the mountains were we nursed,  
loved Stream

Thou near the eagle's nest—within brief sail,  
I, of his bold wing floating on the gale,  
Where thy deep voice could lull me! Faint  
the beam

Of human life when first allowed to gleam  
On mortal notice.—Glory of the vale,  
Such thy meek outset, with a crown, though  
frail,

Kept in perpetual verdure by the steam  
Of thy soft breath!—Less vivid wreath en-  
twined

Nemæan victor's brow; less bright was worn,  
Meed of some Roman chief—in triumph  
borne

With captives chained; and shedding from  
his car

The sunset splendours of a finished war  
Upon the proud enslavers of mankind!

1819.

## VI

## IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKERMOUTH

Where the Author was born, and his Father's  
remains are laid.

A POINT of life between my Parent's dust,  
And yours, my buried Little-ones! am I;

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

And to those graves looking habitually  
In kindred quiet I repose my trust.  
Death to the innocent is more than just,  
And, to the sinner, mercifully bent;  
So may I hope, if truly I repent  
And meekly bear the ills which bear I must:  
And You, my Offspring! that do still remain,  
Yet may outstrip me in the appointed race,  
If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual  
pain  
We breathed together for a moment's space,  
The wrong, by love provoked, let love  
arraign,  
And only love keep in your hearts a place.

## VII

ADDRESS FROM THE SPIRIT OF COCKER-  
MOUTH CASTLE

"THOU look'st upon me, and dost fondly  
think,  
Poet! that, stricken as both are by years,  
We, differing once so much, are now Com-  
peers,  
Prepared, when each has stood his time, to  
sink  
Into the dust. Erewhile a sterner link  
United us; when thou, in boyish play,  
Entering my dungeon, didst become a prey  
To soul-appalling darkness. Not a blink  
Of light was there;—and thus did I, thy  
Tutor,  
Make thy young thoughts acquainted with  
the grave;  
While thou wert chasing the winged butter-  
fly  
Through my green courts; or climbing, a  
bold suitor,  
Up to the flowers whose golden progeny  
Still round my shattered brow in beauty  
wave."

## VIII

## NUN'S WELL, BRIGHAM

So named from the religious House which  
stood close by. I have rather an odd anecdote  
to relate of the Nun's Well. One day the land-  
lady of a public-house, a field's length from the  
well, on the road side, said to me—"You have  
been to see the Nun's Well, Sir?"—"The Nun's  
Well! what is that?" said the Postman, who in  
his royal livery stopt his mail-car at the door.

The landlady and I explained to him what the name meant, and what sort of people the nuns were. A countryman who was standing by, rather tipsy, stammered out—"Aye, those nuns were good people; they are gone; but we shall soon have them back again." The Reform mania was just then at its height.

THE cattle crowding round this beverage clear

To slake their thirst, with reckless hoofs have trod

The encircling turf into a barren clod;  
Through which the waters creep, then disappear,

Born to be lost in Derwent flowing near;  
Yet, o'er the brink, and round the lime-stone cell

Of the pure spring (they call it the "Nun's Well,"

Name that first struck by chance my startled ear)

A tender Spirit broods—the pensive Shade  
Of ritual honours to this Fountain paid  
By hooded Votaresses with saintly cheer;  
Albeit oft the Virgin-mother mild  
Looked down with pity upon eyes beguiled  
Into the shedding of "too soft a tear."<sup>1</sup>

## IX

## TO A FRIEND

## ON THE BANKS OF THE DERWENT

My son John, who was then building a parsonage on his small living at Brigham.

PASTOR and Patriot!—at whose bidding rise

These modest walls, amid a flock that need,  
For one who comes to watch them and to feed,

A fixed Abode—keep down presageful sighs.  
Threats, which the unthinking only can despise,

Perplex the Church; but be thou firm,—be true

To thy first hope, and this good work pursue,

Poor as thou art. A welcome sacrifice  
Dost Thou prepare, whose sign will be the smoke

Of thy new hearth—and sooner shall its wreaths,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Mounting while earth her morning incense breathes,

From wandering fiends of air receive a yoke,  
And straightway cease to aspire, than God disdain

This humble tribute as ill-timed or vain.

## X

## MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

LANDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE DERWENT,  
WORKINGTON

I will mention for the sake of the friend who is writing down these notes, that it was among the fine Scotch firs near Ambleside, and particularly those near Green Bank, that I have over and over again paused at the sight of this image. Long may they stand to afford a like gratification to others!—This wish is not uncalled for, several of their brethren having already disappeared.

DEAR to the Loves, and to the Graces vowed,

The Queen drew back the wimple that she wore;

And to the throng, that on the Cumbrian shore

Her landing hailed, how touchingly she bowed!

And like a Star (that, from a heavy cloud  
Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth darts,  
When a soft summer gale at evening parts  
The gloom that did its loveliness enshroud)  
She smiled; but Time, the old Saturnian seer,

Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed the strand,

With step prelusive to a long array  
Of woes and degradations hand in hand—  
Weeping captivity, and shuddering fear  
Stilled by the ensanguined block of Fotheringay!<sup>2</sup>

## XI

STANZAS SUGGESTED IN A STEAMBOAT  
OFF SAINT BEES' HEADS, ON THE  
COAST OF CUMBERLAND<sup>2</sup>

IF Life were slumber on a bed of down,  
Toil unimposed, vicissitude unknown,  
Sad were our lot: no hunter of the hare  
Exults like him whose javelin from the lair

<sup>2</sup> See Note.



Has roused the lion; no one plucks the rose,  
Whose proffered beauty in safe shelter blows  
'Mid a trim garden's summer luxuries,  
With joy like his who climbs, on hands  
and knees,  
For some rare plant, yon Headland of St.  
Bees.

This independence upon oar and sail,  
This new indifference to breeze or gale,  
This straight-lined progress, furrowing a  
flat lea,

And regular as if locked in certainty—  
Depress the hours. Up, Spirit of the  
storm!

That Courage may find something to per-  
form;

That Fortitude, whose blood disdains to  
freeze

At Danger's bidding, may confront the seas,  
Firm as the towering Headlands of St. Bees.

Dread cliff of Baruth! *that* wild wish may  
sleep,

Bold as if men and creatures of the Deep  
Breathed the same element; too many  
wrecks

Have struck thy sides, too many ghastly  
decks

Hast thou looked down upon, that such a  
thought

Should here be welcome, and in verse en-  
wrought:

With thy stern aspect better far agrees  
Utterance of thanks that we have past with  
ease,

As millions thus shall do, the Headlands of  
St. Bees.

Yet, while each useful Art augments her  
store,

What boots the gain if Nature should lose  
more?

And Wisdom, as she holds a Christian place  
In man's intelligence sublimed by grace?

When Bega sought of yore the Cumbrian  
cras',

Tempestuous winds her holy errand crossed:  
She knelt in prayer—the waves their wrath  
appease;

And, from her vow well weighed in Heaven's  
decrees,

Rose, where she touched the strand, the  
Chantry of St. Bees.

"Cruel of heart were they, bloody of hand,"  
Who in these Wilds then struggled for  
command;

The strong were merciless, without hope  
the weak;

Till this bright Stranger came, fair as day-  
break,

And as a cresset true that darts its length  
Of beamy lustre from a tower of strength;  
Guiding the mariner through troubled  
seas,

And cheering oft his peaceful reveries,  
Like the fixed Light that crowns yon Head-  
land of St. Bees.

To aid the Votaress, miracles believed  
Wrought in men's minds, like miracles  
achieved;

So piety took root; and Song might tell  
What humanizing virtues near her cell  
Sprang up, and spread their fragrance wide  
around;

How savage bosoms melted at the sound  
Of gospel-truth enchained in harmonies  
Wafted o'er waves, or creeping through  
close trees,

From her religious Mansion of St. Bees.

When her sweet Voice, that instrument of  
love,

Was glorified, and took its place, above  
The silent stars, among the angelic quire,  
Her chantry blazed with sacrilegious fire,  
And perished utterly; but her good deeds  
Had sown the spot, that witnessed them,  
with seeds

Which lay in earth expectant, till a breeze  
With quickening impulse answered their  
mute pleas,

And lo! a *statelier* pile, the Abbey of St.  
Bees.

There are the naked clothed, the hungry  
fed;

And Charity extendeth to the dead  
Her intercessions made for the soul's rest  
Of tardy penitents; or for the best  
Among the good (when love might else have  
slept,

Sickened, or died) in pious memory kept.  
Thanks to the austere and simple Devotees,  
Who, to that service bound by venial fees,  
Keep watch before the altars of St. Bees.

Are not, in sooth, their Requiem's sacred  
ties<sup>1</sup>

Woven out of passion's sharpest agonies,  
Subdued, composed, and formalized by  
art,

To fix a wiser sorrow in the heart?

The prayer for them whose hour is past  
away

Says to the Living, profit while ye may!

A little part, and that the worst, he sees  
Who thinks that priestly cunning holds the  
keys

That best unlock the secrets of St. Bees.

Conscience, the timid being's inmost light,  
Hope of the dawn and solace of the night,  
Cheers these Recluses with a steady ray  
In many an hour when judgment goes  
astray.

Ah! scorn not hastily their rule who try  
Earth to despise, and flesh to mortify;  
Consume with zeal, in winged ecstasies  
Of prayer and praise forget their rosaries,  
Nor hear the loudest surges of St. Bees.

Yet none so prompt to succour and protect  
The forlorn traveller, or sailor wrecked  
On the bare coast; nor do they grudge the  
boon

Which staff and cockle hat and sandal  
shoon

Claim for the pilgrim: and, though chid-  
ings sharp

May sometimes greet the strolling minstrel's  
harp,

It is not then, when, swept with sportive  
ease,

It charms a feast-day throng of all degrees,  
Brightening the archway of revered St.  
Bees.

How did the cliffs and echoing hills rejoice  
What time the Benedictine Brethren's voice,  
Imploring, or commanding with meet pride,  
Summoned the Chiefs to lay their feuds  
aside,

And under one blest ensign serve the Lord  
In Palestine. Advance, indignant Sword!  
Flaming till thou from Panym hands release  
That Tomb, dread centre of all sanctities  
Nursed in the quiet Abbey of St. Bees.

But look we now to them whose minds  
from far

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Follow the fortunes which they may not  
share.

While in Judea Fancy loves to roam,  
She helps to make a Holy-land at home:  
The Star of Bethlehem from its sphere  
invites

To sound the crystal depth of maiden  
rights;

And wedded Life, through scriptural mys-  
teries,

Heavenward ascends with all her charities,  
Taught by the hooded Celibates of St. Bees.

Nor be it e'er forgotten how, by skill  
Of cloistered Architects, free their souls to  
fill

With love of God, throughout the Land  
were raised

Churches, on whose symbolic beauty gazed  
Peasant and mail-clad Chief with pious awe;  
As at this day men seeing what they saw,  
Or the bare wreck of faith's solemnities,  
Aspire to more than earthly destinies;  
Witness yon Pile that greets us from St.  
Bees.

Yet more; around those Churches, gathered  
Towns

Safe from the feudal Castle's haughty  
frowns;

Peaceful abodes, where Justice might up-  
hold

Her scales with even hand, and culture  
mould

The heart to pity, train the mind in care  
For rules of life, sound as the Time could  
bear.

Nor dost thou fail, thro' abject love of ease,  
Or hindrance raised by sordid purposes,  
'To bear thy part in this good work, St.  
Bees.

Who with the ploughshare clove the barren  
moors,

And to green meadows changed the swampy  
shores?

Thinned the rank woods; and for the cheer-  
ful grange

Made room, where wolf and boar were  
used to range?

Who taught, and showed by deeds, that  
gentler chains

Should bind the vassal to his lord's  
domains?—

The thoughtful Monks, intent their God to  
 please,  
 For Christ's dear sake, by human sym-  
 pathies  
 Poured from the bosom of thy Church, St.  
 Bees !

But all availed not ; by a mandate given  
 Through lawless will the Brotherhood was  
 driven

Forth from their cells ; their ancient House  
 laid low

In Reformation's sweeping overthrow.  
 But now once more the local Heart revives,  
 The inextinguishable Spirit strives.  
 Oh may that Power who hushed the stormy  
 seas,

And cleared a way for the first Votaries,  
 Prosper the new-born College of St. Bees !

Alas ! the Genius of our age, from Schools  
 Less humble, draws her lessons, aims, and  
 rules.

To Prowess guided by her insight keen  
 Matter and Spirit are as one Machine ;  
 Boastful Idolatress of formal skill  
 She in her own would merge the eternal  
 will :

Better, if Reason's triumphs match with  
 these,

Her flight before the bold credulities  
 That furthered the first teaching of St. Bees.<sup>1</sup>

## XII

IN THE CHANNEL, BETWEEN THE COAST OF  
 CUMBERLAND AND THE ISLE OF MAN

RANGING the heights of Scawfell or Black-  
 comb,

In his lone course the Shepherd oft will  
 pause,

And strive to fathom the mysterious laws  
 By which the clouds, arrayed in light or  
 gloom,

On Mona settle, and the shapes assume  
 Of all her peaks and ridges. What he  
 draws

From sense, faith, reason, fancy, of the  
 cause,

<sup>1</sup> See "Excursion," seventh part ; and "Ec-  
 clesiastical Sketches," second part, near the be-  
 ginning.

He will take with him to the silent tomb.  
 Or, by his fire, a child upon his knee,  
 Haply the untought Philosopher may speak  
 Of the strange sight, nor hide his theory  
 That satisfies the simple and the meek.  
 Blest in their pious ignorance, though  
 weak

To cope with Sages undevoutly free.

## XIII

AT SEA OFF THE ISLE OF MAN

BOLD words affirmed, in days when faith  
 was strong

And doubts and scruples seldom teased the  
 brain,

That no adventurer's bark had power to gain  
 These shores if he approached them bent  
 on wrong ;

For, suddenly up-conjured from the Main,  
 Mists rose to hide the Land—that search,  
 though long

And eager, might be still pursued in vain.  
 O Fancy, what an age was *that* for song !  
 That age, when not by *laws* inanimate,  
 As men believed, the waters were impelled,  
 The air controlled, the stars their courses  
 held ;

But element and orb on *acts* did wait  
 Of *Powers* endued with visible form, in-  
 stinct

With will, and to their work by passion  
 linked.

## XIV

DESIRE we past illusions to recall ?

To reinstate wild Fancy, would we hide  
 Truths whose thick veil Science has drawn  
 aside ?

No,—let this Age, high as she may, instal  
 In her esteem the thirst that wrought man's  
 fall,

The universe is infinitely wide ;  
 And conquering Reason, if self-glorified,  
 Can nowhere move uncrossed by some new  
 wall

Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,  
 Imaginative Faith ! canst overleap,  
 In progress toward the fount of Love,—  
 the throne

Of Power whose ministers the records  
 keep

Of periods fixed, and laws established,  
 less  
 Flesh to exalt than prove its nothingness.

## XV

## ON ENTERING DOUGLAS BAY, ISLE OF MAN

"Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori."

THE feudal Keep, the bastions of Cohorn,  
 Even when they rose to check or to repel  
 Tides of aggressive war, oft served as well  
 Greedy ambition, armed to treat with scorn  
 Just limits; but yon Tower, whose smiles  
 adorn

This perilous bay, stands clear of all offence;  
 Blest work it is of love and innocence,  
 A Tower of refuge built for the else forlorn.  
 Spare it, ye waves, and lift the mariner,  
 Struggling for life, into its saving arms!  
 Spare, too, the human helpers! Do they  
 stir

'Mid your fierce shock like men afraid to  
 die?

No; their dread service nerves the heart it  
 warms,

And they are led by noble HILLARY.<sup>1</sup>

## XVI

## BY THE SEASHORE, ISLE OF MAN

WHY stand we gazing on the sparkling  
 Brine,

With wonder smit by its transparency,  
 And all-enraptured with its purity?—  
 Because the unstained, the clear, the  
 crystalline,

Have ever in them something of benign;  
 Whether in gem, in water, or in sky,  
 A sleeping infant's brow, or wakeful eye  
 Of a young maiden, only not divine.  
 Scarcely the hand forbears to dip its palm  
 For beverage drawn as from a mountain-  
 well;

Temptation centres in the liquid Calm;  
 Our daily raiment seems no obstacle  
 To instantaneous plunging in, deep Sea!  
 And revelling in long embrace with thee.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

<sup>2</sup> The sea-water on the coast of the Isle of Man  
 is singularly pure and beautiful.

## XVII

## ISLE OF MAN

My son William is here the person alluded to  
 as saving the life of the youth, and the circum-  
 stances were as mentioned in the Sonnet.

A YOUTH too certain of his power to wade  
 On the smooth bottom of this clear bright  
 sea,

To sight so shallow, with a bather's glee  
 Leapt from this rock, and but for timely aid  
 He, by the alluring element betrayed,  
 Had perished. Then might Sea-nymphs  
 (and with sighs

Of self-reproach) have chanted elegies  
 Bewailing his sad fate, when he was laid  
 In peaceful earth: for, doubtless, he was  
 frank,

Utterly in himself devoid of guile;  
 Knew not the double-dealing of a smile;  
 Nor aught that makes men's promises a  
 blank,

Or deadly snare: and He survives to bless  
 The Power that saved him in his strange  
 distress.

## XVIII

## ISLE OF MAN

DID pangs of grief for lenient time too keen,  
 Grief that devouring waves had caused, or  
 guilt

Which they had witnessed—sway the man  
 who built

This Homestead, placed where nothing  
 could be seen,

Nought heard, of ocean troubled or serene?  
 A tired Ship-soldier on paternal land,  
 That o'er the channel holds august com-  
 mand,

The dwelling raised,—a veteran Marine.  
 He, in disgust, turned from the neighbour-  
 ing sea

To shun the memory of a listless life  
 That hung between two callings. May no  
 strife

More hurtful here beset him, doomed  
 though free,

Self-doomed, to worse inaction, till his eye  
 Shrink from the daily sight of earth and  
 sky!

## XIX

BY A RETIRED MARINER, H. H.

Mrs. Wordsworth's Brother Henry.

FROM early youth I ploughed the restless  
Main,

My mind as restless and as apt to change;  
Through every clime and ocean did I range,  
In hope at length a competence to gain;  
For poor to Sea I went, and poor I still  
remain.

Year after year I strove, but strove in vain,  
And hardships manifold did I endure,  
For Fortune on me never deigned to smile;  
Yet I at last a resting-place have found,  
With just enough life's comforts to procure,  
In a snug Cove on this our favoured Isle,  
A peaceful spot where Nature's gifts  
abound;

Then sure I have no reason to complain,  
Though poor to Sea I went, and poor I  
still remain.<sup>1</sup>

## XX

AT BALA-SALA, ISLE OF MAN

Supposed to be written by a friend (Mr.  
Cookson) who died there a few years after.

BROKEN in fortune, but in mind entire  
And sound in principle, I seek repose  
Where ancient trees this convent-pile en-  
close,<sup>2</sup>

In ruin beautiful. When vain desire  
Intrudes on peace, I pray the eternal Sire  
To cast a soul-subduing shade on me,  
A grey-haired, pensive, thankful Refugee;  
A shade—but with some sparks of heavenly  
fire

Once to these cells vouchsafed. And when  
I note

The old Tower's brow yellowed as with the  
beams

Of sunset ever there, albeit streams  
Of stormy weather-stains that semblance  
wrought,

I thank the silent Monitor, and say  
"Shine so, my aged brow, at all hours of  
the day!"

<sup>1</sup> See Note.<sup>2</sup> Rushen Abbey.

## XXI

TYNWALD HILL.

Mr. Robinson and I walked the greater part of the way from Castle-town to Piel, and stopped some time at Tynwald Hill. One of my companions was an elderly man, who in a muddled way (for he was tipsy) explained and answered, as far as he could, my enquiries about this place and the ceremonies held here. I found more agreeable company in some little children; one of whom, upon my request, recited the Lord's Prayer to me, and I helped her to a clearer understanding of it as well as I could; but I was not at all satisfied with my own part; hers was much better done, and I am persuaded that, like other children, she knew more about it than she was able to express, especially to a stranger.

ONCE on the top of Tynwald's formal  
mound

(Still marked with green turf circles nar-  
rowing

Stage above stage) would sit this Island's  
King,

The laws to promulgate, enrobed and  
crowned:

While, compassing the little mount around,  
Degrees and Orders stood, each under each:  
Now, like to things within fate's easiest  
reach

The power is merged, the pomp a grave  
has found.

Off with yon cloud, old Snafell!<sup>3</sup> that thine  
eye

Over three Realms may take its widest  
range;

And let, for them, thy fountains utter  
strange

Voices, thy winds break forth in prophecy.  
If the whole State must suffer mortal change  
Like Mona's miniature of sovereignty.

## XXII

DESPOND who will—/ heard a voice exclaim,  
"Though fierce the assault, and shattered  
the defence,

It cannot be that Britain's social frame,  
The glorious work of time and providence,  
Before a flying season's rash pretence,  
Should fall; that She, whose virtue put to  
shame,

<sup>3</sup> See Note.

When Europe prostrate lay, the Con-  
queror's aim,  
Should perish, self-subverted. Black and  
dense  
The cloud is; but brings *that* a day of  
doom.  
To Liberty? Her sun is up the while,  
That orb whose beams round Saxon Alfred  
shone:  
Then laugh, ye innocent Vales! ye Streams,  
sweep on,  
Nor let one billow of our heaven-blest Isle  
Toss in the fanning wind a humbler plume."

## XXIII

## IN THE FRITH OF CLYDE, AILSA CRAG

DURING AN ECLIPSE OF THE SUN, JULY 17

The morning of the eclipse was exquisitely  
beautiful while we passed the Crag as described  
in the Sonnet. On the deck of the steamboat  
were several persons of the poor and labouring  
class, and I could not but be struck by their  
cheerful talk with each other, while not one of  
them seemed to notice the magnificent objects  
with which we were surrounded; and even the  
phenomenon of the eclipse attracted but little of  
their attention. Was it right not to regret this?  
They appeared to me, however, so much alive in  
their own minds to their own concerns that I  
could not look upon it as a misfortune that they  
had little perception for such pleasures as cannot  
be cultivated without ease and leisure. Yet if  
one surveys life in all its duties and relations,  
such ease and leisure will not be found so enviable  
a privilege as it may at first appear. Natural  
Philosophy, Painting, and Poetry, and refined  
taste, are no doubt great acquisitions to society;  
but among those who dedicate themselves to  
such pursuits it is to be feared that few are as  
happy, and as consistent in the management of  
their lives, as the class of persons who at that  
time led me into this course of reflection. I do  
not mean by this to be understood to derogate  
from intellectual pursuits, for that would be  
monstrous: I say it in deep gratitude for this  
compensation to those whose cares are limited to  
the necessities of daily life. Among them, self-  
tormentors so numerous in the higher classes of  
society, are rare.

SINCE risen from ocean, ocean to defy,  
Appeared the crag of Ailsa, ne'er did morn  
With gleaming lights more gracefully adorn

His sides, or wreath with mist his forehead  
high:

Now, faintly darkening with the sun's  
eclipse,

Still is he seen, in lone sublimity,  
Towering above the sea and little ships;  
For dwarfs the tallest seem while sailing by,  
Each for her haven; with her freight of Care,  
Pleasure, or Grief, and Toil that seldom  
looks

Into the secret of to-morrow's fare;  
Though poor, yet rich, without the wealth  
of books,

Or aught that watchful Love to Nature owes  
For her mute Powers, fixed Forms, or  
transient Shows.

## XXIV

## ON THE FRITH OF CLYDE

IN A STEAMBOAT

The mountain outline on the north of this  
island, as seen from the Frith of Clyde, is much  
the finest I have ever noticed in Scotland or  
elsewhere.

ARRAN! a single-crested Teneriffe,  
A St. Helena next—in shape and hue,  
Varying her crowded peaks and ridges blue;  
Who but must covet a cloud-seat, or skiff  
Built for the air, or winged Hippogriff?  
That he might fly, where no one could  
pursue,

From this dull Monster and her sooty crew;  
And, as a God, light on thy topmost cliff.  
Impotent wish! which reason would despise  
If the mind knew no union of extremes,  
No natural bond between the boldest  
schemes,

Ambition frames, and heart-humilities.  
Beneath stern mountains many a soft vale  
lies,  
And lofty springs give birth to lowly  
streams.

## XXV

ON REVISITING DUNOLLY CASTLE<sup>1</sup>

See former series, "Yarrow Revisited," etc.,  
p. 691.

THE captive Bird was gone;—to cliff or  
moor

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Perchance had flown, delivered by the storm;  
 Or he had pined, and sunk to feed the worm:  
 Him found we not: but, climbing, a tall tower,  
 There saw, impaved with rude fidelity  
 Of art mosaic, in a roofless floor,  
 An Eagle with stretched wings, but beamless eye—  
 An Eagle that could neither wail nor soar.  
 Effigy of the Vanished—(shall I dare  
 To call thee so?) or symbol of fierce deeds  
 And of the towering courage which past times  
 Rejoiced in—take, whate'er thou be, a share,  
 Not undeserved, of the memorial rhymes  
 That animate my way where'er it leads!

## XXVI

## THE DUNOLLY EAGLE

NOT to the clouds, not to the cliff, he flew;  
 But when a storm, on sea or mountain bred,  
 Came and delivered him, alone he sped  
 Into the castle-dungeon's darkest mew.  
 Now, near his master's house in open view  
 He dwells, and hears indignant tempests howl,  
 Kennelled and chained. Ye tame domestic fowl,  
 Beware of him! Thou, saucy cockatoo,  
 Look to thy plumage and thy life!—The roe,  
 Fleet as the west wind, is for *him* no quarry;  
 Balanced in ether he will never tarry,  
 Eyeing the sea's blue depths. Poor Bird! even so  
 Doth man of brother man a creature make  
 That clings to slavery for its own sad sake.

## XXVII

## WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF MAC-PHERSON'S OSSIAN

The verses—

“Or strayed  
 From hope and promise, self-betrayed,”  
 were, I am sorry to say, suggested from apprehensions of the fate of my friend, H. C., the subject

of the verses addressed to “H. C. when six years old.” The piece to “Memory” arose out of similar feelings.

Ort have I caught, upon a fitful breeze,  
 Fragments of far-off melodies,  
 With ear not coveting the whole,  
 A part so charmed the pensive soul.  
 While a dark storm before my sight  
 Was yielding, on a mountain height  
 Loose vapours have I watched, that won  
 Prismatic colours from the sun;  
 Nor felt a wish that heaven would show  
 The image of its perfect bow.  
 What need, then, of these finished Strains?  
 Away with counterfeit Remains!  
 An abbey in its lone recess,  
 A temple of the wilderness,  
 Wrecks though they be, announce with feeling

The majesty of honest dealing.  
 Spirit of Ossian! if imbound  
 In language thou may'st yet be found,  
 If aught (intrusted to the pen  
 Or floating on the tongues of men,  
 Albeit shattered and impaired)  
 Subsist thy dignity to guard,  
 In concert with memorial claim  
 Of old grey stone, and high-born name  
 That cleaves to rock or pillared cave  
 Where moans the blast, or beats the wave,  
 Let Truth, stern arbitress of all,  
 Interpret that Original,  
 And for presumptuous wrongs atone;—  
 Authentic words be given, or none!  
 Time is not blind;—yet He, who spares  
 Pyramid pointing to the stars,  
 Hath preyed with ruthless appetite  
 On all that marked the primal flight  
 Of the poetic ecstasy  
 Into the land of mystery.  
 No tongue is able to rehearse  
 One measure, Orpheus! of thy verse;  
 Musæus, stationed with his lyre  
 Supreme among the Elysian quire,  
 Is, for the dwellers upon earth,  
 Mute as a lark ere morning's birth.  
 Why grieve for these, though past away  
 The music, and extinct the lay?  
 When thousands, by severer doom,  
 Full early to the silent tomb  
 Have sunk, at Nature's call; or strayed  
 From hope and promise, self-betrayed;  
 The garland withering on their brows;  
 Stung with remorse for broken vows;

Frantic—else how might they rejoice?  
 And friendless, by their own sad choice!  
 Hail, Bards of mightier grasp! on you  
 I chiefly call, the chosen Few,  
 Who cast not off the acknowledged guide,  
 Who faltered not, nor turned aside;  
 Whose lofty genius could survive  
 Privation, under sorrow thrive;  
 In whom the fiery Muse revered  
 The symbol of a snow-white beard,  
 Bedewed with meditative tears  
 Dropped from the lenient cloud of years.  
 Brothers in soul! though distant times  
 Produced you nursed in various climes,  
 Ye, when the orb of life had waned,  
 A plenitude of love retained:  
 Hence, while in you each sad regret  
 By corresponding hope was met,  
 Ye lingered among human kind,  
 Sweet voices for the passing wind,  
 Departing sunbeams, loth to stop,  
 Though smiling on the last hill top!  
 Such to the tender-hearted maid  
 Even ere her joys begin to fade;  
 Such, haply, to the rugged chief  
 By fortune crushed, or tamed by grief;  
 Appears, on Morven's lonely shore,  
 Dim-gleaming through imperfect lore,  
 The Son of Fingal; such was blind  
 Mæonides of ampler mind;  
 Such Milton, to the fountain head  
 Of glory by Urania led!

## XXVIII

CAVE OF STAFFA<sup>1</sup>

WE saw, but surely, in the motley crowd,  
 Not One of us has felt the far-famed sight;  
 How could we feel it? each the other's blight,  
 Hurried and hurrying, volatile and loud.  
 O for those motions only that invite  
 The Ghost of Fingal to his tuneful Cave  
 By the breeze entered, and wave after wave  
 Softly embosoming the timid light!  
 And by *one* Votary who at will might stand  
 Gazing and take into his mind and heart,  
 With undistracted reverence, the effect  
 Of those proportions where the almighty  
 hand  
 That made the worlds, the sovereign  
 Architect,  
 Has deigned to work as if with human Art!

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XXIX

## CAVE OF STAFFA

## AFTER THE CROWD HAD DEPARTED

THANKS for the lessons of this Spot—fit  
 school  
 For the presumptuous thoughts that would  
 assign  
 Mechanic laws to agency divine;  
 And, measuring heaven by earth, would  
 overrule  
 Infinite Power. The pillared vestibule,  
 Expanding yet precise, the roof embowed;  
 Might seem designed to humble man, when  
 proud  
 Of his best workmanship by plan and tool.  
 Down-bearing with his whole Atlantic  
 weight  
 Of tide and tempest on the Structure's base,  
 And flashing to that Structure's topmost  
 height,  
 Ocean has proved its strength, and of its  
 grace  
 In calms is conscious, finding for his  
 freight  
 Of softest music some reponsive place.

## XXX

## CAVE OF STAFFA

YE shadowy Beings, that have rights and  
 claims  
 In every cell of Fingal's mystic Grot,  
 Where are ye? Driven or venturing to the  
 spot,  
 Our fathers glimpses caught of your thin  
 Frames,  
 And, by your mien and bearing knew your  
 names;  
 And they could hear *his* ghostly song who  
 trod  
 Earth, till the flesh lay on him like a load,  
 While he struck his desolate harp without  
 hopes or aims.  
 Vanished ye are, but subject to recall;  
 Why keep *we* else the instincts whose dread  
 law  
 Ruled here of yore, till what men felt they  
 saw,



Not by black arts but magic natural!  
If eyes be still sworn vassals of belief,  
Yon light shapes forth a Bard, that shade  
a Chief.

## XXXI

FLOWERS ON THE TOP OF THE PILLARS AT  
THE ENTRANCE OF THE CAVE

HOPE smiled when your nativity was cast,  
Children of Summer! Ye fresh Flowers  
that brave  
What Summer here escapes not, the fierce  
wave,  
And whole artillery of the western blast,  
Battering the Temple's front, its long-drawn  
nave  
Smiting, as if each moment were their last.  
But ye, bright Flowers on frieze and archi-  
trave  
Survive, and once again the Pile stands  
fast:  
Calm as the Universe, from specular towers  
Of heaven contemplated by Spirits pure  
With mute astonishment, it stands sus-  
tained  
Through every part in symmetry, to endure,  
Unhurt, the assault of Time with all his  
hours,  
As the supreme Artificer ordained.<sup>1</sup>

## XXXII

## IONA

ON to Iona!—What can she afford  
To us save matter for a thoughtful sigh,  
Heaved over ruin with stability  
In urgent contrast? To diffuse the WORD  
(Thy Paramount, mighty Nature! and  
Time's Lord)  
Her Temples rose, 'mid pagan gloom; but  
why,  
Even for a moment, has our verse deplored  
Their wrongs, since they fulfilled their  
destiny?  
And when, subjected to a common doom  
Of mutability, those far-famed Piles  
Shall disappear from both the sister Isles,  
Iona's Saints, forgetting not past days,  
Garlands shall wear of amaranthine bloom,  
While heaven's vast sea of voices chants  
their praise.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XXXIII

## IONA

## UPON LANDING

How sad a welcome! To each voyager  
Some ragged child holds up for sale a store  
Of wave-worn pebbles, pleading on the  
shore  
Where once came monk and nun with  
gentle stir,  
Blessings to give, news ask, or suit prefer.  
Yet is yon neat trim church a grateful speck  
Of novelty amid the sacred wreck  
Strewn far and wide. Think, proud Philo-  
sopher!  
Fallen though she be, this Glory of the  
west,  
Still on her sons, the beams of mercy shine;  
And 't' hopes, perhaps more heavenly bright  
than thine,  
A grace by thee unsought and unpossess,  
A faith more fixed, a rapture more divine,  
Shall gild their passage to eternal rest."

## XXXIV

## THE BLACK STONES OF IONA

See Martin's *Voyage among the Western Isles*.

HERE on their knees men swore: the stones  
were black,  
Black in the people's minds and words,  
yet they  
Were at that time, as now, in colour grey.  
But what is colour, if upon the rack  
Of conscience souls are placed by deeds  
that lack  
Concord with oaths? What differ night  
and day  
Then, when before the Perjured on his way  
Hell opens, and the heavens in vengeance  
crack  
Above his head uplifted in vain prayer  
To Saint, or Fiend, or to the Godhead  
whom  
He had insulted—Peasant, King, or Thane?  
Fly where the culprit may, guilt meets a  
doom;  
And, from invisible worlds at need laid  
bare,  
Come links for social order's awful chain.

## XXXV

HOMEWARD we turn. Isle of Columba's  
Cell,  
Where Christian piety's soul-cheering  
spark  
(Kindled from Heaven between the light  
and dark  
Of time) shone like the morning-star, fare-  
well!—

And fare thee well, to Fancy visible,  
Remote St. Kilda, lone and loved sea-mark  
For many a voyage made in her swift bark,  
When with more hues than in the rainbow  
dwell

Thou a mysterious intercourse dost hold,  
Extracting from clear skies and air serene,  
And out of sun-bright waves, a lucid veil,  
That thickens, spreads, and, mingling fold  
with fold,

Makes known, when thou no longer canst  
be seen,

Thy whereabouts, to warn the approaching  
sail.

## XXXVI

## GREENOCK

Per me si va nella Città dolente.

WE have not passed into a doleful City,  
We who were led to-day down a grim dell,  
By some too boldly named "the Jaws of  
Hell:"

Where be the wretched ones, the sights for  
pity?

These crowded streets resound no plaintive  
ditty:—

As from the hive where bees in summer  
dwell,

Sorrow seems here excluded; and that  
knell,

It neither damps the gay, nor checks the  
witty.

Alas! too busy Rival of old Tyre,  
Whose merchants Princes were, whose  
decks were thrones;

Soon may the punctual sea in vain respire  
To serve thy need, in union with that Clyde  
Whose nursing current brawls o'er mossy  
stones,

The poor, the lonely, herdsman's joy and  
pride.

## XXXVII

Mosgiel was thus pointed out to me by a young man on the top of the coach on my way from Glasgow to Kilmarnock. It is remarkable that, though Burns lived some time here, and during much the most productive period of his poetical life, he nowhere adverts to the splendid prospects stretching towards the sea and bounded by the peaks of Arran on one part, which in clear weather he must have had daily before his eyes. In one of his poetical effusions he speaks of describing "fair Nature's face" as a privilege on which he sets a high value; nevertheless, natural appearances rarely take a lead in his poetry. It is as a human being, eminently sensitive and intelligent, and not as a poet, clad in his priestly robes and carrying the ensigns of sacerdotal office, that he interests and affects us. Whether he speaks of rivers, hills, and woods, it is not so much on account of the properties with which they are absolutely endowed, as relatively to local patriotic remembrances and associations, or as they ministered to personal feelings, especially those of love, whether happy or otherwise;—yet it is not always so. Soon after we had passed Mosgiel Farm we crossed the Ayr, murmuring and winding through a narrow woody hollow. His line—"Auld hermit Ayr strays through his woods"—came at once to my mind with Irwin, Lugar, Ayr, and Doon,—Ayrshire streams over which he breathes a sigh as being unnamed in song; and surely his own attempts to make them known were as successful as his heart could desire.

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing with  
meet pride

Towards a low roof with green trees half  
concealed,

"Is Mosgiel Farm; and that's the very field  
Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy."  
Far and wide

A plain below stretched seaward, while,  
descried

Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran rose;  
And, by that simple notice, the repose  
Of earth, sky, sea, and air, was vivified.  
Beneath "the random *bield* of clod or  
stone"

Myriads of daisies have shone forth in  
flower

Near the lark's nest, and in their natural  
hour

Have passed away; less happy than the One  
That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died  
to prove

The tender charm of poetry and love.

## XXXVIII

## THE RIVER EDEN, CUMBERLAND

"Nature gives thee flowers that have no rivals among British bowers." This can scarcely be true to the letter; but, without stretching the point at all, I can say that the soil and air appear more congenial with many upon the banks of this river than I have observed in any other parts of Great Britain.

EDEN! till now thy beauty had I viewed  
By glimpses only, and confess with shame  
That verse of mine, whate'er its varying  
mood,

Repeats but once the sound of thy sweet  
name:

Yet fetched from Paradise<sup>1</sup> that honour  
came,  
Rightfully borne; for Nature gives thee  
flowers

That have no rivals among British bowers;  
And thy bold rocks are worthy of their  
fame.

Measuring thy course, fair Stream! at  
length I pay

To my life's neighbour dues of neighbour-  
hood;

But I have traced thee on thy winding way  
With pleasure sometimes by this thought  
restrained—

For things far off we toil, while many a  
good

Not sought, because too near, is never  
gained.

## XXXIX

MONUMENT OF MRS. HOWARD  
by Nollekens

IN WETHERAL CHURCH, NEAR CORBY, ON THE  
BANKS OF THE EDEN

Before this monument was put up in the Church at Wetheral, I saw it in the sculptor's studio. Nollekens, who, by the bye, was a strange and grotesque figure that interfered much with one's admiration of his works, showed me at the same time the various models in clay which he had made, one after another, of the Mother and her Infant: the improvement on each was surprising; and how so much grace, beauty, and tenderness had come out of such a head I was sadly puzzled to conceive. Upon a window-seat in his parlour

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

lay two casts of faces, one of the Duchess of Devonshire, so noted in her day; and the other of Mr. Pitt, taken after his death, a ghastly resemblance, as these things always are, even when taken from the living subject, and more ghastly in this instance from the peculiarity of the features. The heedless and apparently neglectful manner in which the faces of these two persons were left—the one so distinguished in London Society, and the other upon whose counsels and public conduct, during a most momentous period, depended the fate of this great Empire and perhaps of all Europe—afforded a lesson to which the dullest of casual visitors could scarcely be insensible. It touched me the more because I had so often seen Mr. Pitt upon his own ground at Cambridge and upon the floor of the House of Commons.

STRETCHED on the dying Mother's lap,  
lies dead

Her new-born Babe; dire ending of bright  
hope!

But Sculpture here, with the divinest scope  
Of luminous faith, heavenward hath raised  
that head

So patiently; and through one hand has  
spread

A touch so tender for the insensate Child—  
(Earth's lingering love to parting recon-  
ciled,

Brief parting, for the spirit is all but fled)—  
That we, who contemplate the turns of life  
Through this still medium, are consoled  
and cheered;

Feel with her Mother, think the severed  
Wife

Is less to be lamented than revered;  
And own that Art, triumphant over strife  
And pain, hath powers to Eternity en-  
deared.

## XL

## SUGGESTED BY THE FOREGOING

TRANQUILLITY! the sovereign aim wert  
thou

In heathen schools of philosophic lore;  
Heart-stricken by stern destiny of yore  
The Tragic Muse thee served with thought-  
ful vow;

And what of hope Elysium could allow  
Was fondly seized by Sculpture, to restore  
Peace to the Mourner. But when He who  
wore

The crown of thorns around his bleeding  
brow

Warmed our sad being with celestial light,  
*Then* Arts which still had drawn a softening  
grace

From shadowy fountains of the Infinite,  
Communed with that Idea face to face:  
And move around it now as planets run,  
Each in its orbit round the central Sun.

## XLI

## NUNNERY

I became acquainted with the walks of Nun-  
nery when a boy: they are within easy reach of  
a day's pleasant excursion from the town of Pen-  
rith, where I used to pass my summer holidays  
under the roof of my maternal Grandfather. The  
place is well worth visiting; though, within these  
few years, its privacy, and therefore the pleasure  
which the scene is so well fitted to give, has been  
injuriously affected by walks cut in the rocks on  
that side the stream which had been left in its  
natural state.

THE floods are roused, and will not soon  
be weary;

Down from the Pennine Alps<sup>1</sup> how fiercely  
sweeps

CROGLIN, the stately Eden's tributary!  
He raves, or through some moody passage  
creeps

Plotting new mischief—out again he leaps  
Into broad light, and sends, through  
regions airy,

That voice which soothed the Nuns while  
on the steep

They knelt in prayer, or sang to blissful  
Mary.

That union ceased: then, cleaving easy  
walks

Through crags, and smoothing paths beset  
with danger,

Came studious Taste; and many a pensive  
stranger

Dreams on the banks, and to the river  
talks.

What change shall happen next to Nun-  
nery Dell?

Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell!<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The chain of Crossfell.

<sup>2</sup> See Note.

## XLI

## STEAMBOATS, VIADUCTS, AND RAILWAYS

MOTIONS and Means, on land and sea at  
war

With old poetic feeling, not for this,  
Shall ye, by Poets even, be judged amiss!  
Nor shall your presence, howsoe'er it mar  
The loveliness of Nature, prove a bar  
To the Mind's gaining that prophetic sense  
Of future change, that point of vision,  
whence

May be discovered what in soul ye are.

In spite of all that beauty may disown

In your harsh features, Nature doth em-  
brace

Her lawful offspring in Man's art; and  
Time,

Pleased with your triumphs o'er his brother  
Space,

Accepts from your bold hands the proffered  
crown

Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer  
sublime.

## XLIII

THE MONUMENT COMMONLY CALLED LONG  
MEG AND HER DAUGHTERS, NEAR THE  
RIVER EDEN

A WEIGHT of awe, not easy to be borne,  
Fell suddenly upon my Spirit—cast

From the dread bosom of the unknown  
past,

When first I saw that family forlorn.

Speak Thou, whose massy strength and  
stature scorn

The power of years—pre-eminent, and  
placed

Apart, to overlook the circle vast—

Speak, Giant-mother! tell it to the Morn

While she dispels the cumbrous shades of  
Night;

Let the Moon hear, emerging from a cloud;

At whose behest uprose on British ground

That Sisterhood, in hieroglyphic round

Forth-shadowing, some have deemed, the  
infinite

The inviolable God, that tames the proud!<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Note.

## XLIV

## LOWTHER

"Cathedral pomp." It may be questioned whether this union was in the contemplation of the artist when he planned the edifice. However this might be, a poet may be excused for taking the view of the subject presented in this Sonnet.

LOWTHER ! in thy majestic Pile are seen  
Cathedral pomp and grace, in apt accord  
With the baronial castle's sterner mien ;  
Union significant of God adored,  
And charters won and guarded by the  
sword

Of ancient honour ; whence that goodly  
state

Of polity which wise men venerate,  
And will maintain, if God his help afford.  
Hourly the democratic torrent swells ;  
For airy promises and hopes suborned  
The strength of backward-looking thoughts  
is scorned.

Fall if ye must, ye Towers and Pinnacles,  
With what ye symbolise ; authentic Story  
Will say, Ye disappeared with England's  
Glory !

## XLV

## TO THE EARL OF LONSDALE

"Magistratus indicat virum"

LONSDALE ! it were unworthy of a Guest,  
Whose heart with gratitude to thee inclines,  
If he should speak, by fancy touched, of  
signs

On thy Abode harmoniously imprest,  
Yet be unmoved with wishes to attest  
How in thy mind and moral frame agree  
Fortitude, and that Christian Charity  
Which, filling, consecrates the human  
breast.

And if the Motto on thy 'scutcheon teach  
With truth, "THE MAGISTRACY SHOWS  
THE MAN ;"

*That* searching test thy public course has  
stood ;

As will be owned alike by bad and good,  
Soon as the measuring of life's little span  
Shall place thy virtues out of Envy's reach.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XLVI

## THE SOMNAMBULIST

This poem might be dedicated to my friends, Sir G. Beaumont and Mr. Rogers, jointly. While we were making an excursion together in this part of the Lake District we heard that Mr. Glover, the artist, while lodging at Llynph's Tower, had been disturbed by a loud shriek, and upon rising he had learnt that it had come from a young woman in the house who was in the habit of walking in her sleep. In that state she had gone downstairs, and, while attempting to open the outer door, either from some difficulty or the effect of the cold stone upon her feet, had uttered the cry which alarmed him. It seemed to us all that this might serve as a hint for a poem, and the story here told was constructed and soon after put into verse by me as it now stands.

LIST, ye who pass by Llynph's Tower<sup>2</sup>

At eve ; how softly then  
Doth Aira-force, that torrent hoarse,  
Speak from the woody glen !  
Fit music for a solemn vale !

And holier seems the ground  
To him who catches on the gale  
The spirit of a mournful tale,  
Embodied in the sound.

Not far from that fair site whereon

The Pleasure-house is reared,  
As story says, in antique days  
A stern-browed house appeared ;  
Foil to a Jewel rich in light  
There set, and guarded well ;  
Cage for a Bird of plumage bright,  
Sweet-voiced, nor wishing for a flight  
Beyond her native dell.

To win this bright Bird from her cage,

To make this Gem their own,  
Came Barons bold, with store of gold,  
And Knights of high renown ;  
But one She prized, and only one ;  
Sir Eglamore was he ;  
Full happy season, when was known,  
Ye Dales and Hills ! to you alone  
Their mutual loyalty—

<sup>2</sup> A pleasure-house built by the late Duke of Norfolk upon the banks of Ullswater. *FORC* is the word used in the Lake District for Waterfall.

Known chiefly, Aira! to thy glen,  
 Thy brook, and bowers of holly;  
 Where Passion caught what Nature taught,  
 That all but love is folly;  
 Where Fact with Fancy stooped to play;  
 Doubt came not, nor regret—  
 To trouble hours that winged their way,  
 As if through an immortal day  
 Whose sun could never set.

But in old times Love dwelt not long  
 Sequestered with repose;  
 Best throve the fire of chaste desire,  
 Fanned by the breath of foes.  
 "A conquering lance is beauty's test,  
 "And proves the Lover true;"  
 So spake Sir Eglamore, and pressed  
 The drooping Emma to his breast,  
 And looked a blind adieu.

They parted.—Well with him it fared  
 Through wide-spread regions errant;  
 A knight of proof in love's behoof,  
 The thirst of fame his warrant:  
 And She her happiness can build  
 On woman's quiet hours;  
 Though faint, compared with spear and  
 shield,  
 The solace beads and masses yield,  
 And needlework and flowers.

Yet blest was Emma when she heard  
 Her Champion's praise recounted;  
 Though brain would swim, and eyes grow  
 dim,  
 And high her blushes mounted;  
 Or when a bold heroic lay  
 She warbled from full heart;  
 Delightful blossoms for the May  
 Of absence! but they will not stay,  
 Born only to depart.

Hope wanes with her, while lustre fills  
 Whatever path he chooses;  
 As if his orb, that owns no curb,  
 Received the light hers loses.  
 He comes not back; an ampler space  
 Requires for nobler deeds;  
 He ranges on from place to place,  
 Till of his doings is no trace,  
 But what her fancy breeds.

His fame may spread, but in the past  
 Her spirit finds its centre;

Clear sight She has of what he was,  
 And that would now content her.  
 "Still is he my devoted Knight?"  
 The tear in answer flows;  
 Month falls on month with heavier weight;  
 Day sickens round her, and the night  
 Is empty of repose.

In sleep She sometimes walked abroad,  
 Deep sighs with quick words blending,  
 Like that pale Queen whose hands are seen  
 With fancied spots contending;  
 But *she* is innocent of blood,—  
 The moon is not more pure  
 That shines aloft, while through the wood  
 She thrids her way, the sounding Flood  
 Her melancholy lure!

While 'mid the fern-brake sleeps the doe,  
 And owls alone are waking,  
 In white arrayed, glides on the Maid  
 The downward pathway taking,  
 That leads her to the torrent's side  
 And to a holly bower;  
 By whom on this still night desried?  
 By whom in that lone place espied?  
 By thee, Sir Eglamore!

A wandering Ghost, so thinks the Knight,  
 His coming step has thwarted,  
 Beneath the boughs that heard their vows,  
 Within whose shade they parted.  
 Hush, hush, the busy Sleeper see!  
 Perplexed her fingers seem,  
 As if they from the holly tree  
 Green twigs would pluck, as rapidly  
 Flung from her to the stream.

What means the Spectre? Why intent  
 To violate the Tree,  
 Thought Eglamore, by which I swore,  
 Unfading constancy?  
 Here am I, and to-morrow's sun,  
 To her I left, shall prove  
 That bliss is ne'er so surely won  
 As when a circuit has been run  
 Of valour, truth, and love.

So from the spot whereon he stood,  
 He moved with stealthy pace;  
 And, drawing nigh, with his living eye,  
 He recognised the face;  
 And whispers caught, and speeches small,  
 Some to the green-leaved tree,

Some muttered to the torrent-fall;—  
 "Roar on, and bring him with thy call;  
 "I heard, and so may He!"

Soul-shattered was the Knight, nor knew  
 If Emma's Ghost it were,  
 Or boding Shade, or if the Maid  
 Her very self stood there.  
 He touched; what followed who shall tell?  
 The soft touch snapped the thread  
 Of slumber—shrieking back she fell,  
 And the Stream whirled her down the dell  
 Along its foaming bed.

In plunged the Knight!—when on firm  
 ground

The rescued Maiden lay,  
 Her eyes grew bright with blissful light,  
 Confusion passed away;  
 She heard, ere to the throne of grace  
 Her faithful Spirit flew,  
 His voice—beheld his speaking face;  
 And, dying, from his own embrace,  
 She felt that he was true.

So was he reconciled to life:  
 Brief words may speak the rest;  
 Within the dell he built a cell,  
 And there was Sorrow's guest;  
 In hermits' weeds repose he found,  
 From vain temptations free;  
 Beside the torrent dwelling—bound  
 By one deep heart-controlling sound,  
 And awed to piety.

Wild stream of Aira, hold thy course,  
 Nor fear memorial lays,  
 Where clouds that spread in solemn shade,  
 Are edged with golden rays!  
 Dear art thou to the light of heaven,  
 Though minister of sorrow;  
 Sweet is thy voice at pensive even;  
 And thou, in lovers' hearts forgiven,  
 Shalt take thy place with Yarrow!

## XLVII

TO CORDELIA M—

HALLSTEDS, ULLSWATER

NOT in the mines beyond the western main,  
 You say, Cordelia, was the metal sought,

Which a fine skill, of Indian growth, has  
 wrought  
 Into this flexible yet faithful Chain;  
 Nor is it silver of romantic Spain  
 But from our loved Helvellyn's depths was  
 brought,  
 Our own domestic mountain. Thing and  
 thought  
 Mix strangely; trifles light, and partly vain,  
 Can prop, as you have learnt, our nobler  
 being:  
 Yes, Lady, while about your neck is wound  
 (Your casual glance oft meeting) this bright  
 cord,  
 What witchery, for pure gifts of inward  
 seeing,  
 Lurks in it, Memory's Helper, Fancy's  
 Lord,  
 For precious tremblings in your bosom  
 found!

## XLVIII

MOST sweet it is with unuplifted eyes  
 To pace the ground, if path be there or  
 none,  
 While a fair region round the traveller lies  
 Which he forbears again to look upon;  
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,  
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone  
 Of meditation, slipping in between  
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.  
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that  
 day  
 Let us break off all commerce with the  
 Muse:  
 With Thought and Love companions of  
 our way,  
 Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,  
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her  
 dews  
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

## COMPOSED BY THE SEASHORE

These lines were suggested during my residence under my Son's roof at Moresby, on the coast near Whitehaven, at the time when I was composing those verses among the "Evening Voluntaries" that have reference to the sea. It was in that neighbourhood I first became acquainted with the ocean and its appearances and movements. My infancy and early childhood were passed at Cockermouth, about eight miles

from the coast, and I well remember that mysterious awe with which I used to listen to anything said about storms and shipwrecks. Sea-shells of many descriptions were common in the town; and I was not a little surprised when I heard that Mr. Landor had denounced me as a plagiarist from himself for having described a boy applying a sea-shell to his ear and listening to it for intimations of what was going on in its native element. This I had done myself scores of times, and it was a belief among us that we could know from the sound whether the tide was ebbing or flowing.

WHAT mischief cleaves to unsubdued regret, .

How fancy sickens by vague hopes beset;  
How baffled projects on the spirit prey,  
And fruitless wishes eat the heart away,  
The Sailor knows; he best, whose lot is cast

On the relentless sea that holds him fast  
On chance dependent, and the fickle star  
Of power, through long and melancholy war.

O sad it is, in sight of foreign shores,  
Daily to think on old familiar doors,  
Hearths loved in childhood, and ancestral floors;

Or, tossed about along a waste of foam,  
To ruminate on that delightful home  
Which with the dear Betrothed *was* to come;

Or came and was and is, yet meets the eye

Never but in the world of memory;  
Or in a dream recalled, whose smoothest range

Is crossed by knowledge, or by dread, of change,

And if not so, whose perfect joy makes sleep

A thing too bright for breathing man to keep.

Hail to the virtues which that perilous life  
Extracts from Nature's elemental strife;  
And welcome glory won in battles fought  
As bravely as the foe was keenly sought.  
But to each gallant Captain and his crew  
A less imperious sympathy is due,  
Such as my verse now yields, while moon-beams play

On the mute sea in this unruffled bay;  
Such as will promptly flow from every breast,

Where good men, disappointed in the quest

Of wealth and power and honours, long for rest;

Or, having known the splendours of success,  
Sigh for the obscurities of happiness.

1833.

"NOT IN THE LUCID INTERVALS OF LIFE"

The lines following "nor do words" were written with Lord Byron's character, as a poet, before me, and that of others, his contemporaries, who wrote under like influences.

NOT in the lucid intervals of life

That come but as a curse to party-strife;  
Not in some hour when Pleasure with a sigh  
Of languor puts his rosy garland by;  
Not in the breathing-times of that poor slave

Who daily piles up wealth in Mammon's cave—

Is Nature felt, or can be; nor do words,  
Which practised talent readily affords,  
Prove that her hand has touched responsive chords;

Nor has her gentle beauty power to move  
With genuine rapture and with fervent love  
The soul of Genius, if he dare to take  
Life's rule from passion craved for passion's sake;

Untaught that meekness is the cherished bent

Of all the truly great and all the innocent.

But who is innocent? By grace divine,  
Not otherwise, O Nature! we are thine,  
Through good and evil thine, in just degree  
Of rational and manly sympathy.

To all that Earth from pensive hearts is stealing,

And Heaven is now to gladdened eyes revealing,

Add every charm the Universe can show  
Through every change its aspects undergo—  
Care may be respited, but not repealed;  
No perfect cure grows on that bounded field.

Vain is the pleasure, a false calm the peace,

If He, through whom alone our conflicts cease,



Our virtuous hopes without relapse advance,  
Come not to speed the Soul's deliverance;  
To the distempered Intellect refuse  
His gracious help, or give what we abuse.  
1834.

### BY THE SIDE OF RYDAL MERE

THE linnet's warble, sinking towards a  
close,  
Hints to the thrush 'tis time for their  
repose;  
The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and  
again  
The monitor revives his own sweet strain;  
But both will soon be mastered, and the  
cope  
Be left as silent as the mountain-tops,  
Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest  
The throng of rooks, that now, from twig  
or nest,

(After a steady flight on home-bound  
wings,

And a last game of mazy hoverings  
Around their ancient grove) with cawing  
noise

Disturb the liquid music's equipoise.

O Nightingale! Who ever heard thy  
song

Might here be moved, till Fancy grows so  
strong

That listening sense is pardonably cheated  
Where wood or stream by thee was never  
greeted.

Surely, from fairest spots of favoured lands,  
Were not some gifts withheld by jealous  
hands,

This hour of deepening darkness here  
would be

As a fresh morning for new harmony;  
And lays as prompt would hail the dawn  
of Night:

A dawn she has both beautiful and bright,  
When the East kindles with the full moon's  
light;

Not like the rising sun's impatient glow  
Dazzling the mountains, but an overflow  
Of solemn splendour, in mutation slow.

Wanderer by spring with gradual pro-  
gress led,

For sway profoundly felt as widely spread;  
To king, to peasant, to rough sailor, dear,  
And to the soldier's trumpet-wearied ear;

How welcome wouldst thou be to this  
green Vale

Fairer than Tempe! Yet, sweet Nightin-  
gale!

From the warm breeze that bears thee on,  
alight

At will, and stay thy migratory flight;  
Build, at thy choice, or sing, by pool or  
fount,

Who shall complain, or call thee to  
account?

The wisest, happiest, of our kind are they  
That ever walk content with Nature's way,  
God's goodness—measuring bounty as it  
may;

For whom the gravest thought of what  
they miss,

Chastening the fulness of a present bliss,  
Is with that wholesome office satisfied,  
While unrepining sadness is allied

In thankful bosoms to a modest pride.

1834.

### "SOFT AS A CLOUD IS YON BLUE RIDGE"

SOFT as a cloud is yon blue Ridge—the  
Mere

Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless,  
clear,

And motionless; and, to the gazer's eye,  
Deeper than ocean, in the immensity  
Of its vague mountains and unreal sky!  
But, from the process in that still retreat,  
Turn to minuter changes at our feet;  
Observe how dewy Twilight has withdrawn  
The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn,  
And has restored to view its tender green,  
That, while the sun rode high, was lost  
beneath their dazzling sheen.

—An emblem this of what the sober Hour  
Can do for minds disposed to feel its power!  
Thus oft, when we in vain have wished  
away

The petty pleasures of the garish day,  
Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping  
host

(Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his  
post)

And leaves the disencumbered spirit free  
To reassume a staid simplicity.

'Tis well—but what are helps of time  
and place,

When wisdom stands in need of nature's  
grace;  
Why do good thoughts, invoked or not,  
descend,  
Like Angels from their bowers, our virtues  
to befriend;  
If yet To-morrow, unbelied, may say,  
"I come to open out, for fresh display,  
The elastic vanities of yesterday"?

1834.

### "THE LEAVES THAT RUSTLED ON THIS OAK-CROWNED HILL"

Composed by the side of Grasmere lake. The mountains that enclose the vale, especially towards Easdale, are most favourable to the reverberation of sound. There is a passage in the "Excursion," towards the close of the fourth book, where the voice of the raven in flight is traced through the modifications it undergoes, as I have often heard it in that vale and others of this district.

"Often, at the hour

When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,  
Within the circuit of this fabric huge,  
One voice—the solitary raven."

The leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned  
hill,  
And sky that danced among those leaves,  
are still;  
Rest smooths the way for sleep; in field  
and bower  
Soft shades and dews have shed their  
blended power  
On drooping eyelid and the closing flower;  
Sound is there none at which the faintest  
heart  
Might leap, the weakest nerve of superstition  
start;  
Save when the Owl's unexpected scream  
Pierces the ethereal vault; and ('mid the  
gleam  
Of unsubstantial imagery, the dream,  
From the hushed vale's realities, transferred  
To the still lake) the imaginative Bird  
Seems, 'mid inverted mountains, not un-  
heard.

Grave Creature!—whether, while the  
moon shines bright  
On thy wings opened wide for smoothest  
flight,  
Thou art discovered in a roofless tower,

Rising from what may once have been a  
lady's bower;  
Or spied where thou sitt'st moping in thy  
mew  
At the dim centre of a churchyard yew;  
Or, from a rifted crag or ivy tod  
Deep in a forest, thy secure abode,  
Thou giv'st, for pastime's sake, by shriek  
or shout,

A puzzling notice of thy whereabouts—  
May the night never come, nor day be seen,  
When I shall scorn thy voice or mock thy  
mien!

In classic ages men perceived a soul  
Of sapience in thy aspect, headless Owl!  
Thee Athens revered in the studious  
grove;

And, near the golden sceptre grasped by  
Jove,

His Eagle's favourite perch, while round  
him sate

The Gods revolving the decrees of Fate,  
Thou, too, wert present at Minerva's side:—  
Hark to that second larum!—far and wide  
The elements have heard, and rock and  
cave replied.

1834.

### THE LABOURER'S NOON-DAY HYMN

Bishop Ken's Morning and Evening Hymns are, as they deserve to be, familiarly known. Many other hymns have also been written on the same subject; but, not being aware of any being designed for noon-day, I was induced to compose these verses. Often one has occasion to observe cottage children carrying, in their baskets, dinner to their Fathers engaged with their daily labours in the fields and woods. How gratifying would it be to me could I be assured that any portion of these stanzas had been sung by such a domestic concert under such circumstances. A friend of mine has told me that she introduced this Hymn into a village-school which she superintended, and the stanzas in succession furnished her with texts to comment upon in a way which without difficulty was made intelligible to the children, and in which they obviously took delight, and they were taught to sing it to the tune of the old rooth Psalm.

UP to the throne of God is borne  
The voice of praise at early morn,  
And he accepts the punctual hymn  
Sung as the light of day grows dim:

Nor will he turn his ear aside  
From holy offerings at noontide :  
Then here reposing let us raise  
A song of gratitude and praise.

What though our burthen be not light,  
We need not toil from morn to night ;  
The respite of the mid-day hour  
Is in the thankful Creature's power.

Blest are the moments, doubly blest,  
That, drawn from this one hour of rest,  
Are with a ready heart bestowed  
Upon the service of our God !

Each field is then a hallowed spot,  
An altar is in each man's cot,  
A church in every grove that spreads  
Its living roof above our heads.

Look up to Heaven ! the industrious Sun  
Already half his race hath run ;  
*He* cannot halt nor go astray,  
But our immortal Spirits may.

Lord ! since his rising in the East,  
If we have faltered or transgressed,  
Guide, from thy love's abundant source,  
What yet remains of this day's course :

Help with thy grace, through life's short day,  
Our upward and our downward way ;  
And glorify for us the west,  
When we shall sink to final rest. 1834.

### THE REDBREAST

SUGGESTED IN A WESTMORELAND  
COTTAGE

Written at Rydal Mount. All our cats having been banished the house, it was soon frequented by redbreasts. Two or three of them, when the window was open, would come in, particularly when Mrs. Wordsworth was breakfasting alone, and hop about the table picking up the crumbs. My sister being then confined to her room by sickness, as, dear creature, she still is, had one that, without being caged, took up its abode with her, and at night used to perch upon a nail from which a picture had hung. It used to sing and fan her face with its wings in a manner that was very touching.

DRIVEN in by Autumn's sharpening air  
From half-stripped woods and pastures bare,

Brisk Robin seeks a kindlier home :  
Not like a beggar is he come,  
But enters as a looked-for guest,  
Confiding in his ruddy breast,  
As if it were a natural shield  
Charged with a blazon on the field,  
Due to that good and pious deed  
Of which we in the Ballad read.  
But pensive fancies putting by,  
And wild-wood sorrows, speedily  
He plays the expert ventriloquist ;  
And, caught by glimpses now—now missed,  
Puzzles the listener with a doubt  
If the soft voice he throws about  
Comes from within doors or without !  
Was ever such a sweet confusion,  
Sustained by delicate illusion ?  
He's at your elbow—to your feeling  
The notes are from the floor or ceiling ;  
And there's a riddle to be guessed,  
'Till you have marked his heaving chest,  
And busy throat whose sink and swell,  
Betray the Elf that loves to dwell  
In Robin's bosom, as a chosen cell.

Heart-pleased we smile upon the Bird  
If seen, and with like pleasure stirred  
Commend him, when he's only heard.  
But small and fugitive our gain  
Compared with *hers* who long hath lain,  
With languid limbs and patient head  
Reposing on a lone sick-bed ;  
Where now, she daily hears a strain  
That cheats her of too busy cares,  
Eases her pain, and helps her prayers.  
And who but this dear Bird beguiled  
The fever of that pale-faced Child ;  
Now cooling, with his passing wing,  
Her forehead, like a breeze of Spring :  
Recalling now, with descant soft  
Shed round her pillow from aloft,  
Sweet thoughts of angels hovering nigh,  
And the invisible sympathy  
Of " Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,  
Blessing the bed she lies upon " ?<sup>1</sup>  
And sometimes, just as listening ends  
In slumber, with the cadence blends  
A dream of that low-warbled hymn  
Which old folk, fondly pleased to trim

<sup>1</sup> The words—

" Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and John,  
Bless the bed that I lie on,"

are part of a child's prayer, still in general use  
through the northern counties.

Lamps of faith, now burning dim,  
Say that the Cherubs carved in stone,  
When clouds gave way at dead of night  
And the ancient church was filled with  
light,

Used to sing in heavenly tone,  
Above and round the sacred places  
They guard, with winged baby-faces.

Thrice happy Creature! in all lands  
Nurtured by hospitable hands:  
Free entrance to this cot has he,  
Entrance and exit both *yet* free;  
And, when the keen unruffled weather  
That thus brings man and bird together,  
Shall with its pleasantness be past,  
And casement closed and door made fast,  
To keep at bay the howling blast,  
*He* needs not fear the season's rage,  
For the whole house is Robin's cage.  
Whether the bird flit here or there,  
O'er table *lilt*, or perch on chair,  
Though some may frown and make a stir,  
To scare him as a trespasser,  
And he belike will flinch or start,  
Good friends he has to take his part;  
One chiefly, who with voice and look  
Pleads for him from the chimney-nook,  
Where sits the Dame, and wears away  
Her long and vacant holiday;  
With images about her heart,  
Reflected from the years gone by,  
On human nature's second infancy.

1834.

# LINES

SUGGESTED BY A PORTRAIT FROM THE  
PENCIL OF F. STONE

This Portrait has hung for many years in our principal sitting-room, and represents J. Q. as she was when a girl. The picture, though it is somewhat thinly painted, has much merit in tone and general effect: it is chiefly valuable, however, from the sentiment that pervades it. The Anecdote of the saying of the Monk in sight of Titian's picture was told in this house by Mr. Wilkie, and was, I believe, first communicated to the public in this poem, the former portion of which I was composing at the time. Southey heard the story from Miss Hutchinson, and transferred it to the "Doctor"; but it is not easy to explain how my friend Mr. Rogers, in a note subsequently added to his "Italy," was led to speak of the same remarkable words having many years before been

spoken in his hearing by a monk or priest in front of a picture of the Last Supper, placed over a Refectory-table in a convent at Padua.

BEGUILED into forgetfulness of care  
Due to the day's unfinished task; of pen  
Or book regardless, and of that fair scene  
In Nature's prodigality displayed  
Before my window, oftentimes and long  
I gaze upon a Portrait whose mild gleam  
Of beauty never ceases to enrich  
The common light; whose stillness charms  
the air,

Or seems to charm it, into like repose;  
Whose silence, for the pleasure of the ear,  
Surpasses sweetest music. There she sits  
With emblematic purity attired  
In a white vest, white as her marble neck  
Is, and the pillar of the throat would be  
But for the shadow by the drooping chin  
Cast into that recess—the tender shade,  
The shade and light, both there and every-  
where,

And through the very atmosphere she  
breathes,

Broad, clear, and toned harmoniously, with  
skill

That might from nature have been learnt  
in the hour

When the lone shepherd sees the morning  
spread

Upon the mountains. Look at her, who-  
e'er

Thou be that, kindling with a poet's soul,  
Hast loved the painter's true Promethean  
craft

Intensely—from Imagination take  
The treasure,—what mine eyes behold, see  
thou,

Even though the Atlantic ocean roll between.

A silver line, that runs from brow to  
crown

And in the middle parts the braided hair,  
Just serves to show how delicate a soil  
The golden harvest grows in; and those  
eyes,

Soft and capacious as a cloudless sky  
Whose azure depth their colour emulates,  
Must needs be conversant with upward  
looks,

Prayer's voiceless service; but now, seek-  
ing nought

And shunning nought, their own peculiar  
life

Of motion they renounce, and with the head

Partake its inclination towards earth  
In humble grace, and quiet pensiveness  
Caught at the point where it stops short of  
sadness.

Offspring of soul-bewitching Art, make  
me  
Thy confidant! say, whence derived that  
air  
Of calm abstraction? Can the ruling  
thought

Be with some lover far away, or one  
Crossed by misfortune, or of doubted faith?  
Inapt conjecture! Childhood here, a moon  
Crescent in simple loveliness serene,  
Has but approached the gates of woman-  
hood,

Not entered them; her heart is yet un-  
pierced

By the blind Archer-god; her fancy free:  
The fount of feeling if unsought elsewhere,  
Will not be found.

Her right hand, as it lies  
Across the slender wrist of the left arm  
Upon her lap reposing, holds—but mark  
How slackly, for the absent mind permits  
No firmer grasp—a little wild-flower, joined  
As in a posy, with a few pale ears  
Of yellowing corn, the same that overtopped  
And in their common birthplace sheltered  
it

'Till they were plucked together; a blue  
flower

Called by the thrifty husbandman a weed;  
But Ceres, in her garland, might have worn  
That ornament, unblamed. The floweret,  
held

In scarcely conscious fingers, was, she  
knows,

(Her Father told her so) in youth's gay  
dawn

Her Mother's favourite; and the orphan  
Girl,

In her own dawn—a dawn less gay and  
bright,

Loves it, while there in solitary peace  
She sits, for that departed Mother's sake.

—Not from a source less sacred is derived  
(Surely I do not err) that pensive air  
Of calm abstraction through the face dif-  
fused

And the whole person.

Words have something told  
More than the pencil can, and verily  
More than is needed, but the precious Art

Forgives their interference—Art divine,  
That both creates and fixes, in despite  
Of Death and Time, the marvels it hath  
wrought.

Strange contrasts have we in this world  
of ours!

That posture, and the look of filial love  
Thinking of past and gone, with what's  
left

Dearly united, might be swept away  
From this fair Portrait's fleshly Archetype.  
Even by an innocent fancy's slightest freak  
Banished, nor ever, haply, be restored  
To their lost place, or meet in harmony  
So exquisite; but *here* do they abide,  
Enshrined for ages. Is not then the Art  
Godlike, a humble branch of the divine,  
In visible quest of immortality,  
Stretched forth with trembling hope?—In  
every realm,

From high Gibraltar to Siberian plains,  
Thousands, in each variety of tongue  
That Europe knows, would echo this  
appeal;

One above all, a Monk who waits on God  
In the magnific Convent built of yore  
To sanctify the Escorial palace. He—  
Guiding, from cell to cell and room to  
room,

A British Painter (eminent for truth  
In character, and depth of feeling, shown  
By labours that have touched the hearts of  
kings,

And are endeared to simple cottagers)—  
Came, in that service, to a glorious work.  
Our Lord's Last Supper, beautiful as when  
first

The appropriate Picture, fresh from Titian's  
hand,

Graced the Refectory: and there, while  
both

Stood with eyes fixed upon that master-  
piece,

The hoary Father in the Stranger's ear  
Breathed out these words:—"Here daily  
do we sit,

Thanks given to God for daily bread, and  
here

Pondering the mischiefs of these restless  
times,

And thinking of my Brethren, dead, dis-  
persed,

Or changed and changing, I not seldom  
gaze

Upon this solemn Company unmoved  
By shock of circumstance, or lapse of  
years,  
Until I cannot but believe that they—  
They are in truth the Substance, we the  
Shadows."

So spake the mild Jeronymite, his griefs  
Melting away within him like a dream  
Ere he had ceased to gaze, perhaps to  
speak:

And I, grown old, but in a happier land,  
Domestic Portrait! have to verse con-  
signed

In thy calm presence those heart-moving  
words:

Words that can soothe, more than they  
agitate;

Whose spirit, like the angel that went down  
Into Bethesda's pool, with healing virtue  
Informs the fountain in the human breast  
Which by the visitation was disturbed.

—But why this stealing tear? Companion  
mute,

On thee I look, not sorrowing; fare thee  
well,

My Song's Inspirer, once again farewell! <sup>1</sup>  
1834.

### THE FOREGOING SUBJECT RESUMED

AMONG a grave fraternity of Monks,  
For One, but surely not for One alone,  
Triumphs, in that great work, the Painter's  
skill,

Humbling the body, to exalt the soul;  
Yet representing, amid wreck and wrong  
And dissolution and decay, the warm  
And breathing life of flesh, as if already  
Clothed with impassive majesty, and graced  
With no mean earnest of a heritage  
Assigned to it in future worlds. Thou,  
too,

With thy memorial flower, meek Portraiture!  
From whose serene companionship I passed

<sup>1</sup> The pile of buildings, composing the palace and convent of San Lorenzo, has, in common usage, lost its proper name in that of the *Escorial*, a village at the foot of the hill upon which the splendid edifice, built by Philip the Second, stands. It need scarcely be added, that Wilkie is the painter alluded to.

Pursued by thoughts that haunt me still;  
thou also—

Though but a simple object, into light  
Called forth by those affections that endear  
The private hearth; though keeping thy sole  
seat

In singleness, and little tried by time,  
Creation, as it were, of yesterday—  
With a congenial function art endued  
For each and all of us, together joined  
In course of nature under a low roof  
By charities and duties that proceed  
Out of the bosom of a wiser vow.

To a like salutary sense of awe  
Or sacred wonder, growing with the power  
Of meditation that attempts to weigh,  
In faithful scales, things and their opposites,  
Can thy enduring quiet gently raise  
A household small and sensitive,—whose  
love,

Dependent as in part its blessings are  
Upon frail ties dissolving or dissolved  
On earth, will be revived, we trust, in  
heaven.<sup>1</sup> 1834.

### TO A CHILD

#### WRITTEN IN HER ALBUM

This quatrain was extempore on observing this  
image, as I had often done, on the lawn of Rydal  
Mount. It was first written down in the Album  
of my God-daughter, Rotha Quillinan.

SMALL service is true service while it  
lasts:

Of humblest Friends, bright Creature!  
scorn not one:

The Daisy, by the shadow that it casts,  
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the  
Sun. 1834.

<sup>1</sup> In the class entitled "Musings" in Mr. Southey's *Minor Poems*, is one upon his own miniature Picture, taken in childhood, and another upon a landscape painted by Gaspar Poussin. It is possible that every word of the above verses, though similar in subject, might have been written had the author been unacquainted with those beautiful effusions of poetic sentiment. But, for his own satisfaction, he must be allowed thus publicly to acknowledge the pleasure those two Poems of his Friend have given him, and the grateful influence they have upon his mind as often as he reads them, or thinks of them.

## LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM OF THE  
COUNTESS OF LONSDALE. NOV. 5, 1834

This is a faithful picture of that amiable Lady, as she then was. The youthfulness of figure and demeanour and habits, which she retained in almost unprecedented degree, departed a very few years after, and she died without violent disease by gradual decay before she reached the period of old age.

LADY! a Pen (perhaps with thy regard,  
Among the Favoured, favoured not the least)

Left, mid the Records of this Book inscribed,

Deliberate traces, registers of thought  
And feeling, suited to the place and time  
That gave them birth:—months passed,  
and still this hand,

That had not been too timid to imprint  
Words which the virtues of thy Lord inspired,

Was yet not bold enough to write of Thee.  
And why that scrupulous reserve? In sooth

The blameless cause lay in the Theme itself.

Flowers are there many that delight to strive

With the sharp wind, and seem to court the shower,

Yet are by nature careless of the sun  
Whether he shine on them or not; and some,

Where'er he moves along the unclouded sky,  
Turn a broad front full on his flattering beams;

Others do rather from their notice shrink,  
Loving the dewy shade,—a humble band,  
Modest and sweet, a progeny of earth,  
Congenial with thy mind and character,  
High-born Augusta!

Witness, Towers and Groves!  
And Thou, wild Stream, that giv'st the honoured name

Of Lowther to this ancient Line, bear witness

From thy most secret haunts; and ye Parterres,

Which She is pleased and proud to call her own,

Witness how oft upon my noble Friend  
*Mute* offerings, tribute from an inward sense

Of admiration and respectful love,  
Have waited—till the affections could no more

Endure that silence, and broke out in song.  
Snatches of music taken up and dropt  
Like those self-solacing, those under, notes  
Trilled by the redbreast, when autumnal leaves

Are thin upon the bough. Mine, only mine,

The pleasure was, and no one heard the praise,

Checked, in the moment of its issue, checked

And reprehended, by a fancied blush  
From the pure qualities that called it forth.

Thus Virtue lives debarred from Virtue's meed;

Thus, Lady, is retiredness a veil  
That, while it only spreads a softening charm

O'er features looked at by discerning eyes,  
Hides half their beauty from the common gaze;

And thus, even on the exposed and breezy hill

Of lofty station, female goodness walks,  
When side by side with lunar gentleness,  
As in a cloister. Yet the grateful Poor  
(Such the immunities of low estate,

Plain Nature's enviable privilege,  
Her sacred recompence for many wants  
Open their hearts before Thee, pouring out

All that they think and feel, with tears of joy;

And benedictions not unheard in heaven:  
And friend in the ear of friend, where speech is free

To follow truth, is eloquent as they.

Then let the Book receive in these prompt lines

A just memorial; and thine eyes consent  
To read that they, who mark thy course, behold

A life declining with the golden light  
Of summer, in the season of sere leaves;  
See cheerfulness undamped by stealing Time;

See studied kindness flow with easy stream,  
Illustrated with inborn courtesy;

And an habitual disregard of self  
Balanced by vigilance for others' weal.

And shall the Verse not tell of lighter  
gifts

With these ennobling attributes conjoined  
And blended, in peculiar harmony,  
By Youth's surviving spirit? What agile  
grace!

A nymph-like liberty, in nymph-like form,  
Beheld with wonder; whether floor or path  
Thou tread; or sweep—borne on the  
managed steed—

Fleet as the shadows, over down or field,  
Driven by strong winds at play among the  
clouds.

Yet one word more—one farewell word  
—a wish

Which came, but it has passed into a  
prayer—

That, as thy sun in brightness is declining,  
So—at an hour yet distant for *their* sakes  
Whose tender love, here faltering on the  
way

Of a diviner love, will be forgiven—  
So may it set in peace, to rise again  
For everlasting glory won by faith.

### TO THE MOON

COMPOSED BY THE SEASIDE,—ON THE  
COAST OF CUMBERLAND

WANDERER! that stoop'st so low, and  
com'st so near

To human life's unsettled atmosphere;  
Who lov'st with Night and Silence to  
partake,

So might it seem, the cares of them that  
wake;

And, through the cottage-lattice softly  
peeping,

Dost shield from harm the humblest of the  
sleeping;

What pleasure once encompassed those  
sweet names

Which yet in thy behalf the Poet claims,  
An idolizing dreamer as of yore!—

I slight them all; and, on this sea-beat shore  
Sole-sitting, only can to thoughts attend  
That bid me hail thee as the SAILOR'S  
FRIEND;

So call thee for heaven's grace through thee  
made known

By confidence supplied and mercy shown,  
When not a twinkling star or beacon's light  
Abates the perils of a stormy night;

And for less obvious benefits, that find  
Their way, with thy pure help, to heart  
and mind;

Both for the adventurer starting in life's  
prime;

And veteran ranging round from clime to  
clime,

Long-baffled hope's slow fever in his veins,  
And wounds and weakness oft his labour's  
sole remains.

The aspiring Mountains and the wind-  
ing Streams,

Empress of Night! are gladdened by thy  
beams;

A look of thine the wilderness pervades,  
And penetrates the forest's inmost shades;  
Thou, chequering peaceably the minster's  
gloom,

Guid'st the pale Mourner to the lost one's  
tomb;

Canst reach the Prisoner—to his grated cell  
Welcome, though silent and intangible!—  
And lives there one, of all that come and go  
On the great waters toiling to and fro,  
One, who has watched thee at some quiet  
hour

Enthroned aloft in undisputed power,  
Or crossed by vapoury streaks and clouds  
that move

Catching the lustre they in part reprove—  
Nor sometimes felt a fitness in thy sway  
To call up thoughts that shun the glare of  
day,

And make the serious happier than the gay?  
Yes, lovely Moon! if thou so mildly  
bright

Dost rouse, yet surely in thy own despite,  
To fiercer mood the phrenzy-stricken brain,  
Let me a compensating faith maintain;  
That there's a sensitive, a tender, part  
Which thou canst touch in every human  
heart,

For healing and composure.—But, at least  
And mightiest billows ever have confessed  
Thy domination; as the whole vast Sea  
Feels through her lowest depths thy  
sovereignty;

So shines that countenance with especial  
grace

On them who urge the keel her *plains* to  
trace



Furrowing its way right onward. The  
most rude,  
Cut off from home and country, may have  
stood—  
Even till long gazing hath bedimmed his  
eye,  
Or the mute rapture ended in a sigh—  
Touched by accordance of thy placid cheer,  
With some internal lights to memory dear,  
Or fancies stealing forth to soothe the breast  
Tired with its daily share of earth's unrest,—  
Gentle awakenings, visitations meek;  
A kindly influence whereof few will speak,  
Though it can wet with tears the hardest  
cheek.

And when thy beauty in the shadowy  
cave  
Is hidden, buried in its monthly grave;  
Then, while the Sailor, 'mid an open sea  
Swept by a favouring wind that leaves  
thought free,  
Paces the deck—no star perhaps in sight,  
And nothing save the moving ship's own  
light  
To cheer the long dark hours of vacant  
night—  
Oft with his musings does thy image blend,  
In his mind's eye thy crescent horns ascend,  
And thou art still, O Moon, that SAILOR'S  
FRIEND! 1835.

## TO THE MOON

RYDAL

QUEEN of the stars!—so gentle, so benign,  
That ancient Fable did to thee assign,  
When darkness creeping o'er thy silver brow  
Warned thee these upper regions to forego,  
Alternate empire in the shades below—  
A Bard, who, lately near the wide-spread sea  
Traversed by gleaming ships, looked up  
to thee  
With grateful thoughts, doth now thy ris-  
ing hail  
From the close confines of a shadowy vale.  
Glory of night, conspicuous yet serene,  
Nor less attractive when by glimpses seen  
Through cloudy umbrage, well might that  
fair face,  
And all those attributes of modest grace,  
In days when Fancy wrought unchecked by  
fear,

Down to the green earth fetch thee from  
thy sphere,  
To sit in leafy woods by fountains clear!  
O still beloved (for thine, meek Power,  
are charms  
That fascinate the very Babe in arms,  
While he, uplifted towards thee, laughs  
outright,  
Spreading his little palms in his glad  
Mother's sight)  
O still beloved, once worshipped! Time,  
that frowns  
In his destructive flight on earthly crowns,  
Spares thy mild splendour; still those far-  
shot beams  
Tremble on dancing waves and rippling  
streams  
With stainless touch, as chaste as when  
thy praise  
Was sung by Virgin-choirs in festal lays;  
And through dark trials still dost thou  
explore  
Thy way for increase punctual as of yore,  
When teeming Matrons—yielding to rude  
faith  
In mysteries of birth and life and death  
And painful struggle and deliverance—  
prayed  
Of thee to visit them with lenient aid.  
What though the rites be swept away, the  
fanes  
Extinct that echoed to the votive strains;  
Yet thy mild aspect does not, cannot, cease  
Love to promote and purity and peace;  
And Fancy, unproved, even yet may  
trace  
Faint types of suffering in thy beamless  
face.  
Then, silent Monitress! let us—not blind  
To worlds unthought of till the searching  
mind  
Of Science laid them open to mankind—  
Told, also, how the voiceless heavens de-  
clare  
God's glory; and acknowledging thy share  
In that blest charge; let us—without offence  
To aught of highest, holiest, influence—  
Receive whatever good 'tis given thee to  
dispense.  
May sage and simple, catching with one  
eye  
The moral intimations of the sky,  
Learn from thy course, where'er their own  
be taken,

"To look on tempests, and be never  
shaken ;"  
To keep with faithful step the appointed  
way  
Eclipsing or eclipsed, by night or day,  
And from example of thy monthly range  
Gently to brook decline and fatal change ;  
Meek, patient, steadfast, and with loftier  
scope,  
Than thy revival yields, for gladsome hope !  
1835.

# WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF CHARLES LAMB

Light will be thrown upon the tragic circumstance alluded to in this poem when, after the death of Charles Lamb's Sister, his biographer, Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, shall be at liberty to relate particulars which could not, at the time his Memoir was written, be given to the public. Mary Lamb was ten years older than her brother, and has survived him as long a time. Were I to give way to my own feelings, I should dwell not only on her genius and intellectual powers, but upon the delicacy and refinement of manner which she maintained inviolable under most trying circumstances. She was loved and honoured by all her brother's friends ; and others, some of them strange characters, whom his philanthropic peculiarities induced him to countenance. The death of C. Lamb himself was doubtless hastened by his sorrow for that of Coleridge, to whom he had been attached from the time of their being school-fellows at Christ's Hospital. Lamb was a good Latin scholar, and probably would have gone to college upon one of the school foundations but for the impediment in his speech. Had such been his lot, he would most likely have been preserved from the indulgences of social humours and fancies which were often injurious to himself, and causes of severe regret to his friends, without really benefiting the object of his misapplied kindness.

To a good Man of most dear memory  
This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart  
From the great city where he first drew  
breath,  
Was reared and taught ; and humbly  
earned his bread,  
To the strict labours of the merchant's desk  
By duty chained. Not seldom did those tasks  
Tease, and the thought of time so spent  
depress,

His spirit, but the recompence was high ;  
Firm Independence, Bounty's rightful sire ;  
Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air ;  
And when the precious hours of leisure  
came,  
Knowledge and wisdom, gained from converse sweet  
With books, or while he ranged the  
crowded streets  
With a keen eye, and overflowing heart :  
So genius triumphed over seeming wrong,  
And poured out truth in works by thoughtful love  
Inspired — works potent over smiles and  
tears.  
And as round mountain-tops the lightning  
plays,  
Thus innocently sported, breaking forth  
As from a cloud of some grave sympathy,  
Humour and wild instinctive wit, and all  
The vivid flashes of his spoken words.  
From the most gentle creature nursed in  
fields<sup>1</sup>  
Had been derived the name he bore — a  
name,  
Wherever Christian altars have been raised,  
Hallowed to meekness and to innocence ;  
And if in him meekness at times gave way,  
Provoked out of herself by troubles strange,  
Many and strange, that hung about his life ;  
Still, at the centre of his being, lodged  
A soul by resignation sanctified :  
And if too often, self-reproached, he felt  
That innocence belongs not to our kind,  
A power that never ceased to abide in him,  
Charity, 'mid the multitude of sins  
That she can cover, left not his exposed  
To an unforgiving judgment from just  
Heaven.  
Oh, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived !  
\* \* \* \* \*  
From a reflecting mind and sorrowing heart  
Those simple lines flowed with an earnest  
wish,  
Though but a doubting hope, that they  
might serve  
Fitly to guard the precious dust of him  
Whose virtues called them forth. That  
aim is missed ;  
For much that truth most urgently required  
Had from a faltering pen been asked in  
vain :  
Yet, haply, on the printed page received,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

The imperfect record, there, may stand  
unblamed

As long as verse of mine shall breathe the  
air

Of memory, or see the light of love.

Thou wert a scorner of the fields, my  
Friend,

But more in show than truth; and from the  
fields,

And from the mountains, to thy rural grave  
Transported, my soothed spirit hovers o'er  
Its green untrodden turf, and blowing  
flowers;

And taking up a voice shall speak (tho' still  
Awed by the theme's peculiar sanctity  
Which words less free presumed not even  
to touch)

Of that fraternal love, whose heaven-lit  
lamp

From infancy, through manhood, to the  
last

Of threescore years, and to thy latest hour,  
Burnt on with ever-strengthening light,  
enshrined

Within thy bosom.

"Wonderful" hath been  
The love established between man and man,  
"Passing the love of women;" and between  
Man and his help-mate in fast wedlock  
joined

Through God, is raised a spirit and soul of  
love

Without whose blissful influence Paradise  
Had been no Paradise; and earth were now  
A waste where creatures bearing human  
form,

Direst of savage beasts, would roam in fear,  
Joyless and comfortless. Our days glide  
on;

And let him grieve who cannot choose but  
grieve

That he hath been an Elm without his Vine,  
And her bright dower of clustering charities,  
That, round his trunk and branches, might  
have clung

Enriching and adorning. Unto thee,  
Not so enriched, not so adorned, to thee  
Was given (say rather, thou of later birth  
Wert given to her) a Sister—'tis a word  
Timidly uttered, for she *lives*, the meek,  
The self-restraining, and the ever-kind;  
In whom thy reason and intelligent heart  
Found—for all interests, hopes, and tender  
cares,

All softening, humanising, hallowing  
powers,

Whether withheld, or for her sake unsought—  
More than sufficient recompence!

Her love  
(What weakness prompts the voice to tell  
it here?)

Was as the love of mothers; and when  
years,

Lifting the boy to man's estate, had called  
The long-protected to assume the part  
Of a protector, the first filial tie  
Was undissolved; and, in or out of sight,  
Remained imperishably interwoven  
With life itself. Thus, 'mid a shifting  
world,

Did they together testify of time  
And season's difference—a double tree  
With two collateral stems sprung from one  
root;

Such were they—such thro' life they *might*  
have been

In union, in partition only such;  
Otherwise wrought the will of the Most  
High;

Yet, thro' all visitations and all trials,  
Still they were faithful; like two vessels  
launched

From the same beach one ocean to explore  
With mutual help, and sailing—to their  
league

True, as inexorable winds, or bars  
Floating or fixed of polar ice, allow.

But turn we rather, let my spirit turn  
With thine, O silent and invisible Friend!  
To those dear intervals, nor rare nor brief,  
When reunited, and by choice withdrawn  
From miscellaneous converse, ye were  
taught

That the remembrance of foregone distress,  
And the worse fear of future ill (which oft  
Doth hang around it, as a sickly child  
Upon its mother) may be both alike  
Disarmed of power to unsettle present good  
So prized, and things inward and outward  
held

In such an even balance, that the heart  
Acknowledges God's grace, his mercy feels,  
And in its depth of gratitude is still.

O gift divine of quiet sequestration!  
The hermit, exercised in prayer and praise,  
And feeding daily on the hope of heaven,  
Is happy in his vow, and fondly cleaves  
To life-long singleness; but happier far

Was to your souls, and, to the thoughts of others,

A thousand times more beautiful appeared,  
Your *dual* loneliness. The sacred tie  
Is broken; yet why grieve? for Time but holds

His moiety in trust, till Joy shall lead  
To the blest world where parting is unknown.

1835.

## EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG

These verses were written extempore, immediately after reading a notice of the Ettrick Shepherd's death in the Newcastle paper, to the Editor of which I sent a copy for publication. The persons lamented in these verses were all either of my friends or acquaintance. In Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott* an account is given of my first meeting with him in 1803. How the Ettrick Shepherd and I became known to each other has already been mentioned in these notes. He was undoubtedly a man of original genius, but of coarse manners and low and offensive opinions. Of Coleridge and Lamb I need not speak here. Crabbe I have met in London at Mr. Rogers's, but more frequently and favourably at Mr. Hoare's upon Hampstead Heath. Every spring he used to pay that family a visit of some length, and was upon terms of intimate friendship with Mrs. Hoare, and still more with her daughter-in-law, who has a large collection of his letters addressed to herself. After the Poet's decease, application was made to her to give up these letters to his biographer, that they, or at least part of them, might be given to the public. She hesitated to comply, and asked my opinion on the subject. "By no means," was my answer, grounded not upon any objection there might be to publishing a selection from these letters, but from an aversion I have always felt to meet idle curiosity by calling back the recently departed to become the object of trivial and familiar gossip. Crabbe obviously for the most part preferred the company of women to that of men, for this among other reasons, that he did not like to be put upon the stretch in general conversation: accordingly in miscellaneous society his *talk* was so much below what might have been expected from a man so deservedly celebrated, that to me it seemed trifling. It must upon other occasions have been of a different character, as I found in our rambles together on Hampstead Heath, and not so much from a readiness to communicate his knowledge of life and manners as of natural history in all its

branches. His mind was inquisitive, and he seems to have taken refuge from the remembrance of the distresses he had gone through, in these studies and the employments to which they led. Moreover, such contemplations might tend profitably to counterbalance the painful truths which he had collected from his intercourse with mankind. Had I been more intimate with him, I should have ventured to touch upon his office as a minister of the Gospel, and how far his heart and soul were in it so as to make him a zealous and diligent labourer: in poetry, though he wrote much, as we all know, he assuredly was not so. I happened once to speak of pains as necessary to produce merit of a certain kind which I highly valued: his observation was—"It is not worth while." You are quite right, thought I, if the labour encroaches upon the time due to teach truth as a steward of the mysteries of God: if there be cause to fear *that*, write less: but, if poetry is to be produced at all, make what you do produce as good as you can. Mr. Rogers once told me that he expressed his regret to Crabbe that he wrote in his later works so much less correctly than in his earlier. "Yes," replied he, "but then I had a reputation to make; now I can afford to relax." Whether it was from a modest estimate of his own qualifications, or from causes less creditable, his motives for writing verse and his hopes and aims were not so high as is to be desired. After being silent for more than twenty years, he again applied himself to poetry, upon the spur of applause he received from the periodical publications of the day, as he himself tells us in one of his prefaces. Is it not to be lamented that a man who was so conversant with permanent truth, and whose writings are so valuable an acquisition to our country's literature, should have required an impulse from such a quarter?—Mrs. Hemans was unfortunate as a poetess in being obliged by circumstances to write for money, and that so frequently and so much, that she was compelled to look out for subjects wherever she could find them, and to write as expeditiously as possible. As a woman, she was to a considerable degree a spoiled child of the world. She had been early in life distinguished for talent, and poems of hers were published while she was a girl. She had also been handsome in her youth, but her education had been most unfortunate. She was totally ignorant of housewifery, and could as easily have managed the spear of Minerva as her needle. It was from observing these deficiencies, that, one day while she was under my roof, I *purposely* directed her attention to household economy, and told her I had purchased *Scales*, which I intended to present to a young lady as a wedding present; pointed out their utility (for her especial benefit), and said that no *ménage* ought to be without them.

Mrs. Hemans, not in the least suspecting my drift, reported this saying, in a letter to a friend at the time, as a proof of my simplicity. Being disposed to make large allowances for the faults of her education and the circumstances in which she was placed, I felt most kindly disposed towards her, and took her part upon all occasions, and I was not a little affected by learning that after she withdrew to Ireland, a long and severe sickness raised her spirit as it depressed her body. This I heard from her most intimate friends, and there is striking evidence of it in a poem written and published not long before her death. These notices of Mrs. Hemans would be very unsatisfactory to her intimate friends, as indeed they are to myself, not so much for what is said, but what for brevity's sake is left unsaid. Let it suffice to add, there was much sympathy between us, and, if opportunity had been allowed me to see more of her, I should have loved and valued her accordingly; as it is, I remember her with true affection for her amiable qualities, and, above all, for her delicate and irreproachable conduct during her long separation from an unfeeling husband, whom she had been led to marry from the romantic notions of inexperienced youth. Upon this husband I never heard her cast the least reproach, nor did I ever hear her even name him, though she did not wholly forbear to touch upon her domestic position; but never so as that any fault could be found with her manner of adverting to it.

WHEN first, descending from the moorlands,

I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide  
Along a bare and open valley,  
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered,  
Through groves that had begun to shed  
Their golden leaves upon the pathways,  
My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,  
'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies;  
And death upon the braes of Yarrow,  
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes:

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,  
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,  
Since every mortal power of Coleridge  
Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,  
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth:  
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,  
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain-summits,

Or waves that own no curbing hand,  
How fast has brother followed brother  
From sunshine to the sunless land!

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber  
Were earlier raised, remain to hear  
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,  
"Who next will drop and disappear?"

Our haughty life is crowned with darkness,  
Like London with its own black wreath,  
On which with thee, O Crabbe! forth-looking,

I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,  
Thou too art gone before; but why,  
O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,  
Should frail survivors heave a sigh?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,  
Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep;  
For Her who, ere her summer faded,  
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.

No more of old romantic sorrows,  
For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn Maid!  
With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,  
And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet  
dead.<sup>1</sup> Nov. 1835.

#### UPON SEEING A COLOURED DRAWING OF THE BIRD OF PARADISE IN AN ALBUM

I cannot forbear to record that the last seven lines of this Poem were composed in bed during the night of the day on which my sister Sara Hutchinson died about 6 P.M., and it was the thought of her innocent and beautiful life that, through faith, prompted the words—

"On wings that fear no glance of God's pure sight,  
No tempest from his breath."

The reader will find two poems on pictures of this bird among my Poems. I will here observe that in a far greater number of instances than have been mentioned in these notes one poem has, as in this case, grown out of another, either because I felt the subject had been inadequately treated, or that the thoughts and images suggested in course of composition have been such as I

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

found interfered with the unity indispensable to every work of art, however humble in character.

WHO rashly strove thy Image to portray?  
Thou buoyant minion of the tropic air;  
How could he think of the live creature—  
gay

With a divinity of colours, drest  
In all her brightness, from the dancing crest  
Far as the last gleam of the filmy train  
Extended and extending to sustain  
The motions that it graces—and forbear  
To drop his pencil! Flowers of every clime  
Depicted on these pages smile at time;  
And gorgeous insects copied with nice care  
Are here, and likenesses of many a shell  
Tossed ashore by restless waves,  
Or in the diver's grasp fetched up from caves  
Where sea-nymphs might be proud to dwell:

But whose rash hand (again I ask) could dare,

'Mid casual tokens and promiscuous shows,  
To circumscribe this Shape in fixed repose;  
Could imitate for indolent survey,  
Perhaps for touch profane,  
Plumes that might catch, but cannot keep,  
a stain;

And, with cloud-streaks lightest and loftiest,  
share

The sun's first greeting, his last farewell ray!  
Resplendent Wanderer! followed with  
glad eyes

Where'er her course; mysterious Bird!  
To whom, by wondering Fancy stirred,  
Eastern Islanders have given  
A holy name—the Bird of Heaven!  
And even a title higher still,  
The Bird of God! whose blessed will  
She seems performing as she flies  
Over the earth and through the skies  
In never-wearied search of Paradise—  
Region that crowns her beauty with the name  
She bears for us—for us how blest,  
How happy at all seasons, could like aim  
Uphold our Spirits urged to kindred flight  
On wings that fear no glance of God's pure  
sight,

No tempest from his breath, their promised  
rest

Seeking with indefatigable quest  
Above a world that deems itself most wise  
When most enslaved by gross realities!

1835.

## COMPOSED AFTER READING A NEWSPAPER OF THE DAY

"PEOPLE! your chains are severing link  
by link;

Soon shall the Rich be levelled down—the  
Poor

Meet them half way." Vain boast! for  
These, the more

They thus would rise, must low and lower  
sink

Till, by repentance stung, they fear to  
think;

While all lie prostrate, save the tyrant few  
Bent in quick turns each other to undo,  
And mix the poison, they themselves must  
drink.

Mistrust thyself, vain Country! cease to  
cry,

"Knowledge will save me from the threat-  
ened woe."

For, if than other rash ones more thou  
know,

Yet on presumptuous wing as far would fly  
Above thy knowledge as they dared to go,  
Thou wilt provoke a heavier penalty.

1835.

## "BY A BLEST HUSBAND GUIDED, MARY CAME"

This lady was named Carleton; she, along  
with a sister, was brought up in the neighbour-  
hood of Ambleside. The epitaph, a part of it at  
least, is in the church at Bromsgrove, where she  
resided after her marriage.

By a blest Husband guided, Mary came  
From nearest kindred, Vernon her new  
name;

She came, though meek of soul, in seemly  
pride

Of happiness and hope, a youthful Bride.  
O dread reverse! if aught *be* so, which  
proves

That God will chasten whom he dearly  
loves.

Faith bore her up through pains in mercy  
given,

And troubles that were each a step to  
Heaven:

Two Babes were laid in earth before she  
died;

A third now slumbers at the Mother's side;  
Its Sister-twin survives, whose smiles afford  
A trembling solace to her widowed Lord.

Reader! if to thy bosom cling the pain  
Of recent sorrow combated in vain;  
Or if thy cherished grief have failed to thwart

Time still intent on his insidious part,  
Lulling the mourner's best good thoughts  
asleep,

Pilfering regrets we would, but cannot,  
keep;

Bear with Him—judge *Him* gently who  
makes known

His bitter loss by this memorial Stone;  
And pray that in his faithful breast the  
grace

Of resignation find a hallowed place.

1835.

### SONNETS

#### I

DESPONDING Father! mark this altered  
bough,

So beautiful of late, with sunshine warmed,  
Or moist with dews; what more unsightly  
now,

Its blossoms shrivelled, and its fruit, if  
formed,

Invisible? yet Spring her genial brow  
Knits not o'er that discolouring and decay  
As false to expectation. Nor fret thou

At like unlovely process in the May  
Of human life: a Stripling's graces blow,  
Fade and are shed, that from their timely  
fall

(Misdeem it not a cankerous change) may  
grow

Rich mellow bearings, that for thanks shall  
call:

In all men, sinful is it to be slow  
To hope—in Parents, sinful above all.

1835.

#### II

#### ROMAN ANTIQUITIES DISCOVERED AT BISHOPSTONE, HEREFORDSHIRE

My attention to these antiquities was directed  
by Mr. Walker, son to the itinerant Eidouranian  
Philosopher. The beautiful pavement was dis-

covered within a few yards of the front door of  
his parsonage, and appeared from the site (in full  
view of several hills upon which there had formerly  
been Roman encampments) as if it might  
have been the villa of the commander of the  
forces, at least such was Mr. Walker's conjecture.

WHILE poring Antiquarians search the  
ground

Upturned with curious pains, the Bard, a  
Seer,

Takes fire:—The men that have been re-  
appear;

Romans for travel girt, for business gowned;  
And some recline on couches, myrtle-  
crowned,

In festal glee: why not? For fresh and  
clear,

As if its hues were of the passing year,  
Dawns this time-buried pavement. From  
that mound

Hoards may come forth of Trajans, Maxi-  
mins,

Shrunk into coins with all their warlike  
toil:

Or a fierce impress issues with its foil  
Of tenderness—the Wolf, whose suckling  
Twins

The unlettered ploughboy pities when he  
wins

The casual treasure from the furrowed soil.  
1835.

#### III

#### ST. CATHERINE OF LEDBURY

Written on a journey from Brinsop Court,  
Herefordshire.

WHEN human touch (as monkish books  
attest)

Nor was applied nor could be, Ledbury  
bells

Broke forth in concert flung adown the  
dells,

And upward, high as Malvern's cloudy  
crest;

Sweet tones, and caught by a noble Lady  
blest

To rapture! Mabel listened at the side  
Of her loved mistress: soon the music died,  
And Catherine said, *Here I set up my rest.*  
Warned in a dream, the Wanderer long  
had sought

A home that by such miracle of sound  
Must be revealed:—she heard it now, or felt

The deep, deep joy of a confiding thought;  
And there, a saintly anchoress, she dwelt  
Till she exchanged for heaven that happy  
ground. 1835.

## IV

In the month of January, when Dora and I  
were walking from Town-end, Grasmere, across  
the vale, snow being on the ground, she espied,  
in the thick though leafless hedge, a bird's nest  
half filled with snow. Out of this comfortless  
appearance arose this Sonnet, which was, in fact,  
written without the least reference to any individual  
object, but merely to prove to myself that  
I could, if I thought fit, write in a strain that  
Poets have been fond of. On the 14th of February  
in the same year, my daughter, in a sportive mood,  
sent it as a Valentine, under a fictitious name, to  
her cousin C. W.

WHY art thou silent! Is thy love a plant  
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air  
Of absence withers what was once so fair?  
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?  
Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant—

Bound to thy service with unceasing care,  
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant  
For nought but what thy happiness could  
spare.

Speak—though this soft warm heart, once  
free to hold

A thousand tender pleasures, thine and  
mine,

Be left more desolate, more dreary cold  
Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow  
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—

Speak, that my torturing doubts their end  
may know! 1835.

## V

Suggested on the road between Preston and  
Lancaster where it first gives a view of the Lake  
country, and composed on the same day, on the  
roof of the coach.

FOUR fiery steeds impatient of the rein  
Whirled us o'er sunless ground beneath a  
sky  
As void of sunshine, when, from that wide  
plain,

Clear tops of far-off mountains we descried,  
Like a Sierra of cerulean Spain,  
All light and lustre. Did no heart reply?  
Yes, there was One;—for One, asunder fly  
The thousand links of that ethereal chain;  
And green vales open out, with grove and  
field,

And the fair front of many a happy Home;  
Such tempting spots as into vision come  
While Soldiers, weary of the arms they wield  
And sick at heart of strife and Christendom,  
Gaze on the moon by parting clouds revealed.  
1835.

## VI

## TO —

The fate of this poor Dove, as described, was  
told to me at Brinsop Court, by the young lady  
to whom I have given the name of Lesbia.

"Miss not the occasion: by the forelock take  
That subtle Power, the never-halting Time,  
Lest a mere moment's putting-off should make  
Mischance almost as heavy as a crime."

"WAIT, prithee, wait!" this answer  
Lesbia threw

Forth to her Dove, and took no further heed;  
Her eye was busy, while her fingers flew  
Across the harp, with soul-engrossing speed;  
But from that bondage when her thoughts  
were freed

She rose, and toward the close-shut case-  
ment drew,

Whence the poor unregarded Favourite,  
true

To old affections, had been heard to plead  
With flapping wing for entrance. What a  
shriek!

Forced from that voice so lately tuned to a  
strain

Of harmony!—a shriek of terror, pain,  
And self-reproach! for, from aloft, a Kite  
Pounced,—and the Dove, which from its  
ruthless beak

She could not rescue, perished in her sight!  
1835.

## VII

SAID Secrecy to Cowardice and Fraud,  
Falsehood and Treachery, in close council  
met,  
Deep under ground, in Pluto's cabinet,



"The frost of England's pride will soon be thawed;  
 "Hooded the open brow that overawed  
 "Our schemes; the faith and honour, never yet  
 "By us with hope encountered, be upset;—  
 "For once I burst my bands, and cry, applaud!"  
 Then whispered she, "The Bill is carrying out!"  
 They heard, and, starting up, the Brood of Night  
 Clapped hands, and shook with glee their matted locks;  
 All Powers and Places that abhor the light  
 Joined in the transport, echoed back their shout,  
 Hurrah for —, hugging his Ballot-box!  
 1835.

## NOVEMBER 1836

EVEN so for me a Vision sanctified  
 The sway of Death; long ere mine eyes had seen  
 Thy countenance—the still rapture of thy mien—  
 When thou, dear Sister! wert become Death's Bride:  
 No trace of pain or languor could abide  
 That change:—age on thy brow was smoothed—thy cold  
 Wan cheek at once was privileged to unfold  
 A loveliness to living youth denied.  
 Oh! if within me hope should e'er decline,  
 The lamp of faith, lost Friend! too faintly burn;  
 Then may that heaven-revealing smile of thine,  
 The bright assurance, visibly return:  
 And let my spirit in that power divine  
 Rejoice, as, through that power, it ceased to mourn.

"SIX MONTHS TO SIX YEARS  
 ADDED HE REMAINED"

SIX months to six years added he remained  
 Upon this sinful earth, by sin unstained:  
 O blessed Lord! whose mercy then removed  
 A Child whom every eye that looked on loved;  
 Support us, teach us calmly to resign  
 What we possessed, and now is wholly thine!  
 1836.

## MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY

1837

During my whole life I had felt a strong desire to visit Rome and the other celebrated cities and regions of Italy, but did not think myself justified in incurring the necessary expense till I received from Mr. Moxon, the publisher of a large edition of my poems, a sum sufficient to enable me to gratify my wish without encroaching upon what I considered due to my family. My excellent friend H. C. Robinson readily consented to accompany me, and in March 1837, we set off from London, to which we returned in August, earlier than my companion wished or I should myself have desired had I been, like him, a bachelor. These Memorials of that tour touch upon but a very few of the places and objects that interested me, and, in what they do advert to, are for the most part much slighter than I could wish. More particularly do I regret that there is no notice in them of the South of France, nor of the Roman antiquities abounding in that district, especially of the Pont de Degard, which, together with its situation, impressed me full as much as any remains of Roman architecture to be found in Italy. Then there was Vaucluse, with its Fountain, its Petrarch, its rocks of all seasons, its small plots of lawn in their first vernal freshness, and the blossoms of the peach and other trees embellishing the scene on every side. The beauty of the stream also called forcibly for the expression of sympathy from one who from his childhood had studied the brooks and torrents of his native mountains. Between two and three hours did I run about climbing the steep and rugged crags from whose base the water of Vaucluse breaks forth. "Has Laura's Lover," often said I to myself, "ever sat down upon this stone? or has his foot ever pressed that turf?" Some, especially of the female sex, would have felt sure of it: my answer was (impute it to my years), "I fear not." Is it not in fact obvious that many of his love verses must have flowed I do not say from a wish to display his own talent, but from a habit of exercising his intellect in that way rather than from an impulse of his heart? It is otherwise with his Lyrical poems, and particularly with the one upon the degradation of his country: there he pours out his reproaches, lamentations, and aspirations like an ardent and sincere patriot. But enough: it is time to turn to my own effusions, such as they are.

TO

HENRY CRABB ROBINSON

COMPANION ! by whose buoyant Spirit cheered,  
In whose experience trusting, day by day  
Treasures I gained with zeal that neither feared  
The toils nor felt the crosses of the way,  
These records take, and happy should I be  
Were but the Gift a meet Return to thee  
For kindnesses that never ceased to flow,  
And prompt self-sacrifice to which I owe  
Far more than any heart but mine can know.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, Feb. 14th, 1842.

The Tour of which the following Poems are very inadequate remembrances was shortened by report, too well founded, of the prevalence of Cholera at Naples. To make some amends for what was reluctantly left unseen in the South of Italy, we visited the Tuscan Sanctuaries among the Apennines, and the principal Italian Lakes among the Alps. Neither of those lakes, nor of Venice, is there any notice in these Poems, chiefly because I have touched upon them elsewhere. See, in particular, "Descriptive Sketches," "Memorials of a Tour on the Continent in 1820," and a Sonnet upon the extinction of the Venetian Republic.

I

## MUSINGS NEAR AQUAPENDENTE

APRIL 1837

"Not the less

Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear words  
That spake of bards and minstrels."

His, Sir Walter Scott's eye, *did* in fact kindle at them, for the lines, "Places forsaken now," and the two that follow were adopted from a poem of mine which nearly forty years ago was in part read to him, and he never forgot them.

"Old Helvellyn's brow,

Where once together, in his day of strength,  
We stood rejoicing."

Sir Humphrey Davy was with us at the time. We had ascended from Paterdale, and I could not but admire the vigour with which Scott scrambled along that horn of the mountain called "Striding Edge." Our progress was necessarily slow, and was beguiled by Scott's telling many stories and amusing anecdotes, as was his custom. Sir H. Davy would have probably been better pleased if other topics had occasionally been interspersed, and some discussion entered upon: at all events he did not remain with us long at

the top of the mountain, but left us to find our way down its steep side together into the vale of Grasmere, where, at my cottage, Mrs. Scott was to meet us at dinner.

"With faint smile

He said, — 'When I am there, although 'tis fair,  
'Twill be another Yarrow.'"

See among these notes the one on "Yarrow Revisited."

"A few short steps (painful they were)."

This, though introduced here, I did not know till it was told me at Rome by Miss Mackenzie of Seaforth, a lady whose friendly attentions during my residence at Rome I have gratefully acknowledged, with expressions of sincere regret that she is no more. Miss M. told me that she accompanied Sir Walter to the Janicular Mount, and, after showing him the grave of Tasso in the church upon the top, and a mural monument there erected to his memory, they left the church and stood together on the brow of the hill overlooking the city of Rome: his daughter Anne was with them, and she, naturally desirous, for the sake of Miss Mackenzie especially, to have some expression of pleasure from her father, half reproached him for showing nothing of that kind either by his looks or voice: "How can I," replied he, "having only one leg to stand upon, and that in extreme pain!" so that the prophecy was more than fulfilled.

"Over waves rough and deep."

We took boat near the lighthouse at the point of the right horn of the bay which makes a sort of natural port for Genoa; but the wind was high, and the waves long and rough, so that I did not feel quite recompensed by the view of the city, splendid as it was, for the danger apparently incurred. The boatman (I had only one) encouraged me, saying we were quite safe, but I was not a little glad when we gained the shore, though Shelley and Byron—one of them at least, who seemed to have courted agitation from any quarter—would have probably rejoiced in such a situation: more than once I believe were they both in extreme danger even on the Lake of Geneva. Every man however has his fears of some kind or other; and no doubt they had theirs: of all men whom I have ever known, Coleridge had the most of passive courage in bodily peril, but no one was so easily cowed when moral firmness was required in miscellaneous conversation or in the daily intercourse of social life.

"How lovely robed in forenoon light and shade,  
Each ministering to each, didst thou appear,  
Savona."

There is not a single bay along this beautiful coast that might not raise in a traveller a wish to take up his abode there, each as it succeeds seems more inviting than the other; but the desolated convent on the cliff in the bay of Savona struck my fancy most; and had I, for the sake of my own health or that of a dear friend, or any other cause, been desirous of a residence abroad, I should have let my thoughts loose upon a scheme of turning some part of this building into a habitation provided as far as might be with English comforts. There is close by it a row or avenue, I forget which, of tall cypresses. I could not forbear saying to myself—"What a sweet family walk, or one for lonely musings, would be found under the shade!" but there, probably, the trees remained little noticed and seldom enjoyed.

"This flowering broom's dear neighbourhood."

The broom is a great ornament through the months of March and April to the vales and hills of the Apennines, in the wild parts of which it blows in the utmost profusion, and of course successively at different elevations as the season advances. It surpasses ours in beauty and fragrance, but, speaking from my own limited observation only, I cannot affirm the same of several of their wild spring flowers, the primroses in particular, which I saw not unfrequently but thinly scattered and languishing compared to ours.

The note at the close of this poem, upon the Oxford movement, was intrusted to my friend Mr. Frederick Faber. I told him what I wished to be said, and begged that, as he was intimately acquainted with several of the Leaders of it, he would express my thought in the way least likely to be taken amiss by them. Much of the work they are undertaking was grievously wanted, and God grant their endeavours may continue to prosper as they have done.

YE Apennines! with all your fertile vales  
Deeply embosomed, and your winding  
shores

Of either sea—an Islander by birth,  
A Mountaineer by habit, would resound  
Your praise, in meet accordance with your  
claims

Bestowed by Nature, or from man's great  
deeds

Inherited:—presumptuous thought!—it fled  
Like vapour, like a towering cloud, dissolved.  
Not, therefore, shall my mind give way to  
sadness;—

Yon snow-white torrent-fall, plumb down  
it drops

Yet ever hangs or seems to hang in air,  
Lulling the leisure of that high perched  
town,

AQUAPENDENTE, in her lofty site  
Its neighbour and its namesake—town,  
and flood

Forth flashing out of its own gloomy chasm  
Bright sunbeams—the fresh verdure of this  
lawn

Strewn with grey rocks, and on the horizon's  
verge,

O'er intervenient waste, through glimmer-  
ing haze,

Unquestionably kenned, that cone-shaped  
hill

With fractured summit, no indifferent sight  
To travellers, from such comforts as are  
thine,

Bleak Radicofani! escaped with joy—  
These are before me; and the varied scene  
May well suffice, till noon-tide's sultry  
heat

Relax, to fix and satisfy the mind  
Passive yet pleased. What! with this  
Broom in flower

Close at my side! She bids me fly to greet  
Her sisters, soon like her to be attired  
With golden blossoms opening at the feet  
Of my own Fairfield. The glad greeting  
given,

Given with a voice and by a look returned  
Of old companionship, Time counts not  
minutes

Ere, from accustomed paths, familiar fields,  
The local Genius hurries me aloft,  
Transported over that cloud-wooling hill,  
Seat Sandal, a fond suitor of the clouds,  
With dream-like smoothness, to Helvellyn's  
top,

There to alight upon crisp moss and range,  
Obtaining ampler boon, at every step,  
Of visual sovereignty—hills multitudinous,  
(Not Apennine can boast of fairer) hills  
Pride of two nations, wood and lake and  
plains,

And prospect right below of deep coves  
shaped

By skeleton arms, that, from the mountain's  
trunk

Extended, clasp the winds, with mutual  
moan

Struggling for liberty, while undismayed

The shepherd struggles with them. On-ward thence

And downward by the skirt of Greenside fell,

And by Glenridding-screes, and low Glen-coign,

Places forsaken now, though loving still  
The muses, as they loved them in the days  
Of the old minstrels and the border bards.—  
But here am I fast bound; and let it pass,  
The simple rapture;—who that travels far  
To feed his mind with watchful eyes could share

Or wish to share it?—One there surely was,  
"The Wizard of the North," with anxious hope

Brought to this genial climate, when disease  
Preyed upon body and mind—yet not the less

Had his sunk eye kindled at those dear words

That spake of bards and minstrels; and his spirit

Had flown with mine to old Helvellyn's brow,

Where once together, in his day of strength,  
We stood rejoicing, as if earth were free  
From sorrow, like the sky above our heads.

Years followed years, and when, upon the eve

Of his last going from Tweed-side, thought turned,

Or by another's sympathy was led,  
To this bright land, Hope was for him no friend,

Knowledge no help; Imagination shaped  
No promise. Still, in more than ear-deep seats,

Survives for me, and cannot but survive  
The tone of voice which wedded borrowed words

To sadness not their own, when, with faint smile

Forced by intent to take from speech its edge,

He said, "When I am there, although 'tis fair,

'Twill be another Yarrow." <sup>1</sup> Prophecy  
More than fulfilled, as gay Campania's shores

Soon witnessed, and the city of seven hills,  
Her sparkling fountains. and her mouldering  
tombs;

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

And more than all, that Eminence which showed

Her splendours, seen, not felt, the while he stood

A few short steps (painful they were) apart  
From Tasso's Convent-haven, and retired grave.

Peace to their Spirits! why should Poesy  
Yield to the lure of vain regret, and hover  
In gloom on wings with confidence outspread

To move in sunshine?—Utter thanks, my Soul!

Tempered with awe, and sweetened by compassion

For them who in the shades of sorrow dwell,

That I—so near the term to human life  
Appointed by man's common heritage,  
Frail as the frailest, one withal (if that  
Deserve a thought) but little known to fame—

Am free to rove where Nature's loveliest looks,

Art's noblest relics, history's rich bequests,  
Failed to reanimate and but feebly cheered  
The whole world's Darling—free to rove at will

O'er high and low, and if requiring rest,  
Rest from enjoyment only.

Thanks poured forth  
For what thus far hath blessed my wanderings, thanks

Fervent but humble as the lips can breathe  
Where gladness seems a duty—let me guard

Those seeds of expectation which the fruit  
Already gathered in this favoured Land  
Enfolds within its core. The faith be mine,

That He who guides and governs all, approves

When gratitude, though disciplined to look  
Beyond these transient spheres, doth wear a crown

Of earthly hope put on with trembling hand;

Nor is least pleased, we trust, when golden beams,

Reflected through the mists of age, from hours

Of innocent delight, remote or recent,  
Shoot but a little way—'tis all they can—  
Into the doubtful future. Who would keep

Power must resolve to cleave to it through life,

Else it deserts him, surely as he lives.

Saints would not grieve nor guardian angels frown

If one—while tossed, as was my lot to be,  
In a frail bark urged by two slender oars  
Over waves rough and deep, that, when  
they broke,

Dashed their white foam against the palace walls

Of Genoa the superb—should there be led  
To meditate upon his own appointed tasks,  
However humble in themselves, with  
thoughts

Raised and sustained by memory of Him  
Who oftentimes within those narrow bounds  
Rocked on the surge, there tried his spirit's  
strength

And grasp of purpose, long ere sailed his  
ship

To lay a new world open.

Nor less prized  
Be those impressions which incline the  
heart

To mild, to lowly, and to seeming weak,  
Bend that way her desires. The dew, the  
storm—

The dew whose moisture fell in gentle  
drops

On the small hyssop destined to become,  
By Hebrew ordinance devoutly kept,  
A purifying instrument—the storm  
That shook on Lebanon the cedar's top,  
And as it shook, enabling the blind roots  
Further to force their way, endowed its  
trunk

With magnitude and strength fit to uphold  
The glorious temple—did alike proceed  
From the same gracious will, were both an  
offspring

Of bounty infinite.

Between Powers that aim  
Higher to lift their lofty heads, impelled  
By no profane ambition, Powers that thrive  
By conflict, and their opposites, that trust  
In lowliness—a midway tract there lies  
Of thoughtful sentiment for every mind  
Pregnant with good. Young, Middle-aged,  
and Old,

From century on to century, must have  
known

The emotion—nay, more fitly were it said—  
The blest tranquillity that sunk so deep

Into my spirit, when I paced, enclosed  
In Pisa's Campo Santo, the smooth floor  
Of its Arcades paved with sepulchral slabs,  
And through each window's open fretwork  
looked

O'er the blank Area of sacred earth  
Fetched from Mount Calvary, or haply  
delved

In precincts nearer to the Saviour's tomb,  
By hands of men, humble as brave, who  
fought

For its deliverance—a capacious field  
That to descendants of the dead it holds  
And to all living mute memento breathes,  
More touching far than ought which on the  
walls

Is pictured, or their epitaphs can speak,  
Of the changed City's long-departed power,  
Glory, and wealth, which, perilous as they  
are,

Here did not kill, but nourished, Piety.  
And, high above that length of cloistral  
roof,

Peering in air and backed by azure sky,  
To kindred contemplations ministers  
The Baptistery's dome, and that which  
swells

From the Cathedral pile; and with the  
twain

Conjoined in prospect mutable or fixed  
(As hurry on in eagerness the feet,  
Or pause) the summit of the Leaning-  
tower.

Nor less remuneration waits on him  
Who having left the Cemetery stands  
In the Tower's shadow, of decline and fall  
Admonished not without some sense of  
fear,

Fear that soon vanishes before the sight  
Of splendour unextinguished, pomp un-  
scathed,

And beauty unimpaired. Grand in itself,  
And for itself, the assemblage, grand and  
fair

To view, and for the mind's consenting  
eye

A type of age in man, upon its front  
Bearing the world-acknowledged evidence  
Of past exploits, nor fondly after more  
Struggling against the stream of destiny,  
But with its peaceful majesty content.

—Oh what a spectacle at every turn  
The Place unfolds, from pavement skinned  
with moss

Or grass-grown spaces, where the heaviest  
foot

Provokes no echoes, but must softly tread;  
Where Solitude with Silence paired stops  
short

Of Desolation, and to Ruin's scythe  
Decay submits not.

But where'er my steps  
Shall wander, chiefly let me cull with care  
Those images of genial beauty, oft  
Too lovely to be pensive in themselves  
But by reflection made so, which do best  
And fittest serve to crown with fragrant  
wreaths

Life's cup when almost filled with years,  
like mine

—How lovely robed in forenoon light and  
shade,

Each ministering to each, didst thou appear  
Savona, Queen of territory fair

As aught that marvellous coast thro' all its  
length

Yields to the Stranger's eye. Remembrance  
holds

As a selected treasure thy one cliff,  
That, while it wore for melancholy crest

A shattered Convent, yet rose proud to have  
Clinging to its steep sides a thousand herbs  
And shrubs, whose pleasant looks gave  
proof how kind

The breath of air can be where earth had  
else

Seemed churlish. And behold, both far  
and near,

Garden and field all decked with orange  
bloom,

And peach and citron, in Spring's mildest  
breeze

Expanding; and, along the smooth shore  
curved

Into a natural port, a tideless sea,  
To that mild breeze with motion and with  
voice

Softly responsive; and, attuned to all  
Those vernal charms of sight and sound,  
appeared

Smooth space of turf which from the guard-  
ian fort

Sloped seaward, turf whose tender April  
green,

In coolest climes too fugitive, might even  
here

Plead with the sovereign Sun for longer stay  
Than his unmitigated beams allow,

Nor plead in vain, if beauty could preserve,  
From mortal change, aught that is born on  
earth

Or doth on time depend.

While on the brink  
Of that high Convent-crested cliff I stood,  
Modest Savona! over all did brood  
A pure poetic Spirit—as the breeze,  
Mild—as the verdure, fresh—the sunshine,  
bright—

Thy gentle Chiabrera!—not a stone,  
Mural or level with the trodden floor,  
In Church or Chapel, if my curious quest  
Missed not the truth, retains a single name  
Of young or old, warrior, or saint, or sage,  
To whose dear memories his sepulchral verse<sup>1</sup>  
Paid simple tribute, such as might have  
flowed

From the clear spring of a plain English  
heart,

Say rather, one in native fellowship  
With all who want not skill to couple grief  
With praise, as genuine admiration prompts.  
The grief, the praise, are severed from their  
dust,

Yet in his page the records of that worth  
Survive, uninjured;—glory then to words,  
Honour to word-preserving Arts, and hail  
Ye kindred local influences that still,

If Hope's familiar whispers merit faith,  
Await my steps when they the breezy height  
Shall range of philosophic Tusculum;  
Or Sabine vales explored inspire a wish  
To meet the shade of Horace by the side  
Of his Bandusian fount; or I invoke  
His presence to point out the spot where  
once

He sate, and eulogized with earnest pen  
Peace, leisure, freedom, moderate desires;  
And all the immunities of rural life  
Extolled, behind Vacuna's crumbling fane.  
Or let me loiter, soothed with what is given  
Nor asking more, on that delicious Bay,  
Parthenope's Domain—Virgilian haunt,  
Illustrated with never-dying verse,  
And, by the Poet's laurel-shaded tomb,  
Age after age to Pilgrims from all lands  
Endeared.

And who—if not a man as cold  
In heart as dull in brain—while pacing  
ground  
Chosen by Rome's legendary Bards, high  
minds

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Out of her early struggles well inspired  
To localize heroic acts—could look  
Upon the spots with undelighted eye,  
Though even to their last syllable the Lays  
And very names of those who gave them  
birth

Have perished?—Verily, to her utmost  
depth,

Imagination feels what Reason fears not  
To recognize, the lasting virtue lodged  
In those bold fictions that, by deeds assigned  
To the Valerian, Fabian, Curian Race,  
And others like in fame, created Powers  
With attributes from History derived,  
By Poesy irradiate, and yet graced,  
Through marvellous felicity of skill,  
With something more propitious to high  
aims

Than either, pent within her separate  
sphere,

Can oft with justice claim.

And not disdaining  
Union with those primeval energies  
To virtue consecrate, stoop ye from your  
height

Christian Traditions! at my Spirit's call  
Descend, and, on the brow of ancient  
Rome

As she survives in ruin, manifest  
Your glories mingled with the brightest hues  
Of her memorial halo, fading, fading,  
But never to be extinct while Earth endures.  
O come, if undishonoured by the prayer,  
From all her Sanctuaries!—Open for my  
feet

Ye Catacombs, give to mine eyes a glimpse  
Of the Devout, as, 'mid your glooms convened

For safety, they of yore enclasped the Cross  
On knees that ceased from trembling, or  
intoned

Their orisons with voices half-suppressed,  
But sometimes heard, or fancied to be  
heard,

Even at this hour.

And thou Mamertine prison,  
Into that vault receive me from whose  
depth

Issues, revealed in no presumptuous vision,  
Albeit lifting human to divine,  
A Saint, the Church's Rock, the mystic  
Keys

Grasped in his hand; and lo! with upright  
sword

Prefiguring his own impendent doom,  
The Apostle of the Gentiles; both prepared  
To suffer pains with heathen scorn and  
hate

Inflicted;—blessèd Men, for so to Heaven  
They follow their dear Lord!

Time flows—nor winds,  
Nor stagnates, nor precipitates his course,  
But many a benefit borne upon his breast  
For human-kind sinks out of sight, is gone,  
No one knows how; nor seldom is put forth  
An angry arm that snatches good away,  
Never perhaps to reappear. The Stream  
Has to our generation brought and brings  
Innumerable gains; yet we, who now  
Walk in the light of day, pertain full surely  
To a chilled age, most pitiaibly shut out  
From that which *is* and actuates, by forms,  
Abstractions, and by lifeless fact to fact  
Minutely linked with diligence uninspired,  
Unrectified, unguided, unsustained,  
By godlike insight. To this fate is doomed  
Science, wide-spread and spreading still as  
be

Her conquests, in the world of sense made  
known,

So with the internal mind it fares; and so  
With morals, trusting, in contempt or fear  
Of vital principle's controlling law,  
To her purblind guide Expediency; and so  
Suffers religious faith. Elate with view  
Of what is won, we overlook or scorn  
The best that should keep pace with it, and  
must,

Else more and more the general mind will  
droop,

Even as if bent on perishing. There lives  
No faculty within us which the Soul  
Can spare, and humblest earthly Weal  
demands,

For dignity not placed beyond her reach,  
Zealous co-operation of all means  
Given or acquired, to raise us from the mire,  
And liberate our hearts from low pursuits.  
By gross Utilities enslaved, we need  
More of ennobling impulse from the past,  
If to the future aught of good must come  
Sounder and therefore holier than the ends  
Which, in the giddiness of self-applause,  
We covet as supreme. O grant the crown  
That Wisdom wears, or take his treacher-  
ous staff

From Knowledge!—If the Muse, whom I  
have served

This day, be mistress of a single pearl  
Fit to be placed in that pure diadem ;  
Then, not in vain, under these chestnut  
boughs

Reclined, shall I have yielded up my soul  
To transports from the secondary founts  
Flowing of time and place, and paid to  
both

Due homage; nor shall fruitlessly have  
striven,

By love of beauty moved, to enshrine in  
verse

Accordant meditations, which in times  
Vexed and disordered, as our own, may  
shed

Influence, at least among a scattered few,  
To soberness of mind and peace of heart  
Friendly; as here to my repose hath been  
This flowering broom's dear neighbourhood,  
the light

And murmur issuing from yon pendent  
flood,

And all the varied landscape. Let us now  
Rise, and to-morrow greet magnificent  
Rome.<sup>1</sup>

## II

## THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO AT ROME

Sir George Beaumont told me that, when he first visited Italy, pine-trees of this species abounded, but that on his return thither, which was more than thirty years after, they had disappeared from many places where he had been accustomed to admire them, and had become rare all over the country, especially in and about Rome. Several Roman villas have within these few years passed into the hands of foreigners, who, I observed with pleasure, have taken care to plant this tree, which in course of years will become a great ornament to the city and to the general landscape. May I venture to add here, that having ascended the Monte Mario, I could not resist embracing the trunk of this interesting monument of my departed friend's feelings for the beauties of nature, and the power of that art which he loved so much, and in the practice of which he was so distinguished.

I SAW far off the dark top of a Pine  
Look like a cloud—a slender stem the tie  
That bound it to its native earth—poised  
high

'Mid evening hues, along the horizon line,

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Striving in peace each other to outshine.  
But when I learned the Tree was living there,  
Saved from the sordid axe by Beaumont's  
care,

Oh, what a gush of tenderness was mine !  
The rescued Pine-Tree, with its sky so bright  
And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts of  
home,

Death-parted friends, and days too swift in  
flight,

Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome  
(Then first apparent from the Pincian  
Height)

Crowned with St. Peter's everlasting Dome.<sup>2</sup>

## III

## AT ROME

Sight is at first a sad enemy to imagination and to those pleasures belonging to old times with which some exertions of that power will always mingle : nothing perhaps brings this truth home to the feelings more than the city of Rome ; not so much in respect to the impression made at the moment when it is first seen and looked at as a whole, for then the imagination may be invigorated and the mind eye's quickened ; but when particular spots or objects are sought out, disappointment is I believe invariably felt. Ability to recover from this disappointment will exist in proportion to knowledge, and the power of the mind to reconstruct out of fragments and parts, and to make details in the present subservient to more adequate comprehension of the past.

Is this, ye Gods, the Capitolian Hill?  
Yon petty Steep in truth the fearful Rock,  
Tarpeian named of yore, and keeping still  
That name, a local Phantom proud to mock  
The Traveller's expectation?—Could our  
Will

Destroy the ideal Power within, 'twere done  
Thro' what men see and touch,—slaves  
wandering on,

Impelled by thirst of all but Heaven-taught  
skill.

Full oft, our wish obtained, deeply we sigh ;  
Yet not unrecompensed are they who learn,  
From that depression raised, to mount on  
high

With stronger wing, more clearly to discern  
Eternal things ; and, if need be, defy  
Change, with a brow not insolent, though  
stern.

<sup>2</sup> See Note.



## IV

AT ROME—REGRETS—IN ALLUSION TO  
NIEBUHR AND OTHER MODERN HISTORIANS

THOSE old credulities, to nature dear,  
 Shall they no longer bloom upon the stock  
 Of History, stript naked as a rock  
 'Mid a dry desert? What is it we hear?  
 The glory of Infant Rome must disappear,  
 Her morning splendours vanish, and their  
   place  
 Know them no more. If Truth, who veiled  
   her face  
 With those bright beams yet hid it not,  
   must steer  
 Henceforth a humbler course perplexed and  
   slow;  
 One solace yet remains for us who came  
 Into this world in days when story lacked  
 Severe research, that in our hearts we  
   know  
 How, for exciting youth's heroic flame,  
 Assent is power, belief the soul of fact.

## V

## CONTINUED

COMPLACENT Fictions were they, yet the  
   same  
 Involved a history of no doubtful sense,  
 History that proves by inward evidence  
 From what a precious source of truth it  
   came.  
 Ne'er could the boldest Eulogist have  
   dared  
 Such deeds to paint, such characters to  
   frame,  
 But for coeval sympathy prepared  
 To greet with instant faith their loftiest  
   claim.  
 None but a noble people could have loved  
 Flattery in Ancient Rome's pure-minded  
   style:  
 Not in like sort the Runic Scald was  
   moved;  
 He, nursed 'mid savage passions that defile  
 Humanity, sang feats that well might call  
 For the blood-thirsty mead of Odin's  
   riotous Hall.

## VI

## PLEA FOR THE HISTORIAN

FORBEAR to deem the Chronicler unwise,  
 Ungentle, or untouched by seemly ruth,  
 Who, gathering up all that Time's envious  
   tooth  
 Has spared of sound and grave realities,  
 Firmly rejects those dazzling flatteries,  
 Dear as they are to unsuspecting Youth,  
 That might have drawn down Clio from the  
   skies  
 To vindicate the majesty of truth.  
 Such was her office while she walked with  
   men,  
 A Muse, who, not unmindful of her Sire  
 All-ruling Jove, whate'er the theme might  
   be  
 Revered her Mother, sage Mnemosyne,  
 And taught her faithful servants how the  
   lyre  
 Should animate, but not mislead, the pen.<sup>1</sup>

## VII

## AT ROME

I have a private interest in this Sonnet, for I  
 doubt whether it would ever have been written  
 but for the lively picture given me by Anna  
 Ricketts of what they had witnessed of the indig-  
 nation and sorrow expressed by some Italian  
 noblemen of their acquaintance upon the sur-  
 render, which circumstances had obliged them to  
 make, of the best portion of their family mansions  
 to strangers.

THEY—who have seen the noble Roman's  
   scorn  
 Break forth at thought of laying down his  
   head,  
 When the blank day is over, garreted  
 In his ancestral palace, where, from morn  
 To night, the desecrated floors are worn  
 By feet of purse-proud strangers; they—  
   who have read  
 In one meek smile, beneath a peasant's  
   shed,  
 How patiently the weight of wrong is  
   borne;  
 They—who have heard some learned  
   Patriot treat

<sup>1</sup> Quem virum—lyra—  
 —sumes celebrare Clio?

Of freedom, with mind grasping the whole  
 theme  
 From ancient Rome, downwards through  
 that bright dream  
 Of Commonwealths, each city a starlike seat  
 Of rival glory; they—fallen Italy—  
 Nor must, nor will, nor can, despair of  
 Thee!

## VIII

## NEAR ROME, IN SIGHT OF ST. PETER'S

LONG has the dew been dried on tree and  
 lawn:  
 O'er man and beast a not unwelcome boon  
 Is shed, the languor of approaching noon;  
 To shady rest withdrawing or withdrawn  
 Mute are all creatures, as this couchant  
 fawn,  
 Save insect-swarms that hum in air afloat,  
 Save that the Cock is crowing, a shrill note,  
 Startling and shrill as that which roused the  
 dawn.  
 —Heard in that hour, or when, as now, the  
 nerve  
 Shrinks from the note as from a mistimed  
 thing,  
 Oft for a holy warning may it serve,  
 Charged with remembrance of *his* sudden  
 sting,  
 His bitter tears, whose name the Papal  
 Chair  
 And yon resplendent Church are proud to  
 bear.

## IX

## AT ALBANO

This Sonnet is founded on simple fact, and was  
 written to enlarge, if possible, the views of those  
 who can see nothing but evil in the intercessions  
 countenanced by the Church of Rome. That  
 they are in many respects lamentably pernicious  
 must be acknowledged; but, on the other hand,  
 they who reflect, while they see and observe,  
 cannot but be struck with instances which will  
 prove that it is a great error to condemn in all  
 cases such mediation as purely idolatrous. This  
 remark bears with especial force upon addresses  
 to the Virgin.

DAYS passed—and Monte Calvo would not  
 clear

His head from mist; and, as the wind  
 sobbed through  
 Albano's dripping Ilex avenue,  
 My dull forebodings in a Peasant's ear  
 Found casual vent. She said, "Be of  
 good cheer;  
 Our yesterday's procession did not sue  
 In vain; the sky will change to sunny blue,  
 Thanks to our Lady's grace." I smiled to  
 hear,  
 But not in scorn;—the Matron's Faith may  
 lack  
 The heavenly sanction needed to ensure  
 Fulfilment; but, we trust, her upward track  
 Stops not at this low point, nor wants the  
 lure  
 Of flowers the Virgin without fear may own,  
 For by her Son's blest hand the seed was  
 sown.

## X

NEAR Anio's stream, I spied a gentle Dove  
 Perched on an olive branch, and heard her  
 cooing  
 'Mid new-born blossoms that soft airs were  
 wooing,  
 While all things present told of joy and  
 love.  
 But restless Fancy left that olive grove  
 To hail the exploratory Bird renewing  
 Hope for the few, who, at the world's un-  
 doing,  
 On the great flood were spared to live and  
 move.  
 O bounteous Heaven! signs true as dove  
 and bough  
 Brought to the ark are coming evermore,  
 Given though we seek them not, but, while  
 we plough  
 This sea of life without a visible shore,  
 Do neither promise ask nor grace implore  
 In what alone is ours, the living Now.

## XI

FROM THE ALBAN HILLS, LOOKING  
TOWARDS ROME

FORGIVE, illustrious Country! these deep  
 sighs,  
 Heaved less for thy bright plains and hills  
 bestrown

With monuments decayed or overthrown,  
 For all that tottering stands or prostrate  
   lies,  
 Than for like scenes in moral vision shown,  
 Ruin perceived for keener sympathies;  
 Faith crushed, yet proud of weeds, her  
   gaudy crown;  
 Virtues laid low, and mouldering energies.  
 Yet why prolong this mournful strain?—  
   Fallen Power,  
 Thy fortunes, twice exalted, might provoke  
 Verse to glad notes prophetic of the hour  
 When thou, uprisen, shalt break thy double  
   yoke,  
 And enter, with prompt aid from the Most  
   High,  
 On the third stage of thy great destiny.

## XII

## NEAR THE LAKE OF THRASYMENE

WHEN here with Carthage Rome to conflict  
   came,  
 An earthquake, mingling with the battle's  
   shock,  
 Checked not its rage; unfelt the ground  
   did rock,  
 Sword dropped not, javelin kept its deadly  
   aim.—  
 Now all is sun-bright peace. Of that day's  
   shame,  
 Or glory, not a vestige seems to endure,  
 Save in this Rill that took from blood the  
   name<sup>1</sup>  
 Which yet it bears, sweet Stream! as  
   crystal pure.  
 So may all trace and sign of deeds aloof  
 From the true guidance of humanity,  
 'Thro' Time and Nature's influence, purify  
 Their spirit; or, unless they for reproof  
 Or warning serve, thus let them all, on  
   ground  
 That gave them being, vanish to a sound.

## XIII

## NEAR THE SAME LAKE

FOR action born, existing to be tried,  
 Powers manifold we have that intervene

<sup>1</sup> Sanguinetto.

To stir the heart that would too closely  
   screen  
 Her peace from images to pain allied.  
 What wonder if at midnight, by the side  
 Of Sanguinetto, or broad Thrasymane,  
 The clang of arms is heard, and phantoms  
   glide,  
 Unhappy ghosts in troops by moonlight  
   seen;  
 And singly thine, O vanquished Chief!  
   whose corse,  
 Unburied, lay hid under heaps of slain:  
 But who is He?—the Conqueror. Would  
   he force  
 His way to Rome? Ah, no,—round hill  
   and plain  
 Wandering, he haunts, at fancy's strong  
   command,  
 This spot—his shadowy death-cup in his  
   hand.

## XIV

## THE CUCKOO AT LAVERNA

MAY 25, 1837

Among a thousand delightful feelings connected  
 in my mind with the voice of the cuckoo, there is  
 a personal one which is rather melancholy. I  
 was first convinced that age had rather dulled my  
 hearing, by not being able to catch the sound at  
 the same distance as the younger companions of  
 my walks; and of this failure I had a proof upon  
 the occasion that suggested these verses. I did  
 not hear the sound till Mr. Robinson had twice  
 or thrice directed my attention to it.

LIST—'twas the Cuckoo.—O with what  
   delight  
 Heard I that voice! and catch it now,  
   though faint,  
 Far off and faint, and melting into air,  
 Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again!  
 Those louder cries give notice that the Bird,  
 Although invisible as Echo's self,  
 Is wheeling hitherward. Thanks, happy  
   Creature,  
 For this unthought-of greeting!

While allured  
 From vale to hill, from hill to vale led on,  
 We have pursued, through various lands,  
   a long  
 And pleasant course; flower after flower  
   has blown,

Embellishing the ground that gave them  
birth

With aspects novel to my sight; but still  
Most fair, most welcome, when they drank  
the dew

In a sweet fellowship with kinds beloved,  
For old remembrance sake. And oft—  
where Spring

Displayed her richest blossoms among files  
Of orange-trees bedecked with glowing  
fruit

Ripe for the hand, or under a thick shade  
Of Ilex, or, if better suited to the hour,  
The lightsome Olive's twinkling canopy—  
Oft have I heard the Nightingale and  
Thrush

Blending as in a common English grove  
Their love-songs; but, where'er my feet  
might roam,

Whate'er assemblages of new and old,  
Strange and familiar, might beguile the  
way,

A gratulation from that vagrant Voice  
Was wanting,—and most happily till now.

For see, Laverna! mark the far-famed  
Pile,

High on the brink of that precipitous rock,  
Implanted like a Fortress, as in truth  
It is, a Christian Fortress, garrisoned  
In faith and hope, and dutiful obedience,  
By a few Monks, a stern society,  
Dead to the world and scorning earth-born  
joys.

Nay—though the hopes that drew, the  
fears that drove,

St. Francis, far from Man's resort, to abide  
Among these sterile heights of Apennine,  
Bound him, nor, since he raised yon House,  
have ceased

To bind his spiritual Progeny, with rules  
Stringent as flesh can tolerate and live;  
His milder Genius (thanks to the good God  
That made us) over those severe restraints  
Of mind, that dread heart-freezing discipline,  
Doth sometimes here predominate, and  
works

By unsought means for gracious purposes;  
For earth through heaven, for heaven, by  
changeable earth,

Illustrated, and mutually endeared.

Rapt though He were above the power of  
sense,

Familiarly, yet out of the cleansed heart  
Of that once sinful Being overflowed

On sun, moon, stars, the nether elements,  
And every shape of creature they sustain,  
Divine affections; and with beast and  
bird

(Stilled from afar—such marvel story tells—  
By casual outbreak of his passionate words,  
And from their own pursuits in field or  
grove

Drawn to his side by look or act of love  
Humane, and virtue of his innocent life)  
He went to hold companionship so free,  
So pure, so fraught with knowledge and  
delight,

As to be likened in his Followers' minds  
To that which our first Parents, ere the  
fall

From their high state darkened the Earth  
with fear,

Held with all kinds in Eden's blissful bowers.

Then question not that, 'mid the austere  
Band,

Who breathe the air he breathed, tread  
where he trod,

Some true Partakers of his loving spirit  
Do still survive, and, with those gentle  
hearts

Consorted, Others, in the power, the faith,  
Of a baptized imagination, prompt

To catch from Nature's humblest monitors  
Whate'er they bring of impulses sublime.

Thus sensitive must be the Monk, though  
pale

With fasts, with vigils worn, depressed by  
years,

Whom in a sunny glade I chanced to see,  
Upon a pine-tree's storm-uprooted trunk,  
Seated alone, with forehead sky-ward raised,  
Hands clasped above the crucifix he wore

Appended to his bosom, and lips closed  
By the joint pressure of his musing mood

And habit of his vow. That ancient Man—  
Nor haply less the Brother whom I marked,

As we approached the Convent gate, aloft  
Looking far forth from his aerial cell,

A young Ascetic—Poet, Hero, Sage,  
He might have been, Lover belike he was—

If they received into a conscious ear  
The notes whose first faint greeting startled  
me,

Whose sedulous iteration thrilled with joy  
My heart—may have been moved like me  
to think,

Ah! not like me who walk in the world's  
ways,

On the great Prophet, styled *the Voice of One*

*Crying amid the wilderness*, and given,  
Now that their snows must melt, their herbs  
and flowers

Revive, their obstinate winter pass away,  
That awful name to Thee, thee, simple  
Cuckoo,

Wandering in solitude, and evermore  
Foretelling and proclaiming, ere thou leave  
This thy last haunt beneath Italian skies  
To carry thy glad tidings over heights  
Still loftier, and to climes more near the  
Pole.

Voice of the Desert, fare-thee-well; sweet  
Bird!

If that substantial title please thee more,  
Farewell!—but go thy way, no need hast  
thou

Of a good wish sent after thee; from bower  
To bower as green, from sky to sky as  
clear,

Thee gentle breezes waft—or airs, that  
meet

Thy course and sport around thee, softly  
fan—

Till Night, descending upon hill and vale,  
Grants to thy mission a brief term of  
silence,

And folds thy pinions up in blest repose.

XV

AT THE CONVENT OF CAMALDOLI

GRIEVE for the Man who hither came be-  
reft,

And seeking consolation from above;  
Nor grieve the less that skill to him was  
left

To paint this picture of his lady-love:  
Can she, a blessed saint, the work approve?  
And oh, good Brethren of the cowl, a thing  
So fair, to which with peril he must cling,  
Destroy in pity, or with care remove.

That bloom—those eyes—can they assist  
to bind

Thoughts that would stray from Heaven?  
The dream must cease

To be; by Faith, not sight, his soul must  
live;

Else will the enamoured Monk too surely  
find

How wide a space can part from inward  
peace

The most profound repose his cell can  
give.

XVI

CONTINUED

THE world forsaken, all its busy cares  
And stirring interests shunned with desperate  
flight,

All trust abandoned in the healing might  
Of virtuous action; all that courage dares,  
Labour accomplishes, or patience bears—  
Those helps rejected, they, whose minds  
perceive

How subtly works man's weakness, sighs  
may heave

For such a One beset with cloistral snares.

Father of Mercy! rectify his view,  
If with his vows this object ill agree;  
Shed over it thy grace, and thus subdue  
Imperious passion in a heart set free:—  
That earthly love may to herself be true,  
Give him a soul that cleaveth unto thee.<sup>1</sup>

XVII

AT THE EREMITES OR UPPER CONVENT OF  
CAMALDOLI

WHAT aim had they, the Pair of Monks,  
in size

Enormous, dragged, while side by side  
they sate,

By panting steers up to this convent gate?  
How, with empurpled cheeks and pampered  
eyes,

Dare they confront the lean austerities  
Of Brethren who, here fixed, on Jesu wait  
In sackcloth, and God's anger deprecate  
Through all that humbles flesh and mortifies?  
Strange contrast!—verily the world of  
dreams,

Where mingle, as for mockery combined,  
Things in their very essences at strife,  
Shows not a sight incongruous as the  
extremes

That everywhere, before the thoughtful  
mind,

Meet on the solid ground of waking life.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

## XVIII

AT VALLOMBROSA<sup>1</sup>

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks  
In Vallombrosa, where Etrurian shades  
High over-arch'd embower."<sup>2</sup>

## PARADISE LOST.

I must confess, though of course I did not acknowledge it in the few lines I wrote in the Strangers' book kept at the convent, that I was somewhat disappointed at Vallombrosa. I had expected, as the name implies, a deep and narrow valley overshadowed by enclosing hills; but the spot where the convent stands is in fact not a valley at all, but a cove or crescent open to an extensive prospect. In the book before mentioned, I read the notice in the English language that if any one would ascend the steep ground above the convent, and wander over it, he would be abundantly rewarded by magnificent views. I had not time to act upon this recommendation, and only went with my young guide to a point, nearly on a level with the site of the convent, that overlooks the vale of Arno for some leagues. To praise great and good men has ever been deemed one of the worthiest employments of poetry, but the objects of admiration vary so much with time and circumstances, and the noblest of mankind have been found, when intimately known, to be of characters so imperfect, that no eulogist can find a subject which he will venture upon with the animation necessary to create sympathy, unless he confines himself to a particular art or he takes something of a one-sided view of the person he is disposed to celebrate. This is a melancholy truth, and affords a strong reason for the poetic mind being chiefly exercised in works of fiction: the poet can then follow wherever the spirit of admiration leads him, unchecked by such suggestions as will be too apt to cross his way if all that he is prompted to utter is to be tested by fact. Something in this spirit I have written in the note attached to the sonnet on the king of Sweden; and many will think that in this poem and elsewhere I have spoken of the author of *Paradise Lost* in a strain of panegyric scarcely justifiable by the tenor of some of his opinions, whether theological or political, and by the temper he carried into public affairs in which, unfortunately for his genius, he was so much concerned.

"VALLOMBROSA—I longed in thy shadiest  
wood

To slumber, reclined on the moss-covered  
floor!"

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

<sup>2</sup> See for the two *first lines*, "Stanzas composed in the Simplon Pass."

Fond wish that was granted at last, and  
the Flood,  
That lulled me asleep bids me listen once  
more.  
Its murmur how soft! as it falls down the  
steep,  
Near that Cell—yon sequestered Retreat  
high in air—  
Where our Milton was wont lonely vigils  
to keep  
For converse with God, sought through  
study and prayer.

The Monks still repeat the tradition with  
pride,  
And its truth who shall doubt? for his  
Spirit is here;  
In the cloud-piercing rocks doth her  
grandeur abide,  
In the pines pointing heavenward her  
beauty austere;  
In the flower-besprent meadows his genius  
we trace  
Turned to humbler delights, in which youth  
might confide,  
That would yield him fit help while pre-  
figuring that Place  
Where, if Sin had not entered, Love never  
had died.

When with life lengthened out came a  
desolate time,  
And darkness and danger had compassed  
him round,  
With a thought he would flee to these  
haunts of his prime  
And here once again a kind shelter be  
found.  
And let me believe that when nightly the  
Muse  
Did waft him to Sion, the glorified hill,  
Here also, on some favoured height, he  
would choose  
To wander, and drink inspiration at will.

Vallombrosa! of thee I first heard in the  
page  
Of that holiest of Bards, and the name for  
my mind  
Had a musical charm, which the winter of  
age  
And the changes it brings had no power to  
unbind.  
And now, ye Miltonian shades! under you

I repose, nor am forced from sweet fancy  
to part,  
While your leaves I behold and the brooks  
they will strew,  
And the realised vision is clasped to my  
heart.

Even so, and unblamed, we rejoice as we  
may  
In Forms that must perish, frail objects of  
sense;  
Unblamed—if the Soul be intent on the day  
When the Being of Beings shall summon  
her hence.  
For he and he only with wisdom is blest  
Who, gathering true pleasures wherever  
they grow,  
Looks up in all places, for joy or for rest,  
To the Fountain whence Time and Eternity  
flow.

## XIX

## AT FLORENCE

Upon what evidence the belief rests that this  
stone was a favourite seat of Dante, I do not  
know; but a man would little consult his own in-  
terest as a traveller, if he should busy himself with  
doubts as to the fact. The readiness with which  
traditions of this character are received, and the  
fidelity with which they are preserved from  
generation to generation, are an evidence of  
feelings honourable to our nature. I remember  
how, during one of my rambles in the course of a  
college vacation, I was pleased on being shown  
a seat near a kind of rocky cell at the source of  
the river, on which it was said that Congreve  
wrote his "Old Bachelor." One can scarcely  
hit on any performance less in harmony with the  
scene; but it was a local tribute paid to intellect  
by those who had not troubled themselves to  
estimate the moral worth of that author's com-  
edies; and why should they? He was a man  
distinguished in his day; and the sequestered  
neighbourhood in which he often resided was  
perhaps as proud of him as Florence of her  
Dante: it is the same feeling, though proceeding  
from persons one cannot bring together in this  
way without offering some apology to the Shade  
of the great Visionary.

UNDER the shadow of a stately Pile,  
The dome of Florence, pensive and alone,  
Nor giving heed to aught that passed the  
while,  
I stood, and gazed upon a marble stone,

The laurelled Dante's favourite seat. A  
throne,  
In just esteem, it rivals; though no style  
Be there of decoration to beguile  
The mind, depressed by thought of great-  
ness flown.  
As a true man, who long had served the  
lyre,  
I gazed with earnestness, and dared no  
more.  
But in his breast the mighty Poet bore  
A Patriot's heart, warm with undying fire.  
Bold with the thought, in reverence I sate  
down,  
And, for a moment, filled that empty  
Throne.

## XX

BEFORE THE PICTURE OF THE BAPTIST,  
BY RAPHAEL, IN THE GALLERY AT  
FLORENCE

It was very hot weather during the week we  
stayed at Florence; and, never having been there  
before, I went through much hard service, and  
am not therefore *ashamed* to confess I fell asleep  
before this picture and sitting with my back to-  
wards the Venus de Medicis. Buonaparte—in  
answer to one who had spoken of his being in a  
sound sleep up to the moment when one of his  
great battles was to be fought, as a proof of the  
calmness of his mind and command over anxious  
thoughts—said frankly, that he slept because from  
bodily exhaustion he could not help it. In like  
manner it is noticed that criminals on the night  
previous to their execution seldom awake before  
they are called, a proof that the body is the  
master of us far more than we need be willing to  
allow. Should this note by any possible chance  
be seen by any of my countrymen who might  
have been in the gallery at the time (and several  
persons were there) and witnessed such an inde-  
corum, I hope he will give up the opinion which  
he might naturally have formed to my prejudice.

THE Baptist might have been ordained to  
cry  
Forth from the towers of that huge Pile,  
wherein  
His Father served Jehovah; but how win  
Due audience, how for aught but scorn  
defy  
The obstinate pride and wanton revelry  
Of the Jerusalem below, her sin  
And folly, if they with united din  
Drown not at once mandate and prophecy?

Therefore the Voice spake from the Desert,  
thence

To Her, as to her opposite in peace,  
Silence, and holiness, and innocence,  
To Her and to all Lands its warning sent,  
Crying with earnestness that might not  
cease,

"Make straight a highway for the Lord—  
repent!"

## XXI

## AT FLORENCE—FROM MICHAEL ANGELO

However at first these two sonnets from Michael Angelo may seem in their spirit somewhat inconsistent with each other, I have not scrupled to place them side by side as characteristic of their great author, and others with whom he lived. I feel nevertheless a wish to know at what periods of his life they were respectively composed. The latter, as it expresses, was written in his advanced years when it was natural that the Platonism that pervades the one should give way to the Christian feeling that inspired the other: between both there is more than poetic affinity.

RAPT above earth by power of one fair  
face,

Hers in whose sway alone my heart delights,

I mingle with the blest on those pure  
heights

Where Man, yet mortal, rarely finds a  
place.

With Him who made the Work that Work  
accords

So well, that by its help and through his  
grace

I raise my thoughts, inform my deeds and  
words,

Clasping her beauty in my soul's embrace.

Thus, if from two fair eyes mine cannot  
turn,

I feel how in their presence doth abide  
Light which to God is both the way and  
guide;

And, kindling at their lustre, if I burn,  
My noble fire emits the joyful ray

That through the realms of glory shines for  
aye.

## XXII

## AT FLORENCE—FROM M. ANGELO

ETERNAL Lord! eased of a cumbrous  
load,

And loosened from the world, I turn to  
Thee;

Shun, like a shattered bark, the storm, and  
flee

To thy protection for a safe abode.

The crown of thorns, hands pierced upon  
the tree,

The meek, benign, and lacerated face,

To a sincere repentance promise grace,

To the sad soul give hope of pardon free.

With justice mark not Thou, O Light  
divine,

My fault, nor hear it with thy sacred ear;

Neither put forth that way thy arm severe;  
Wash with thy blood my sins; thereto incline

More readily the more my years require  
Help, and forgiveness speedy and entire.

## XXIII

AMONG THE RUINS OF A CONVENT IN THE  
APENNINES

The political revolutions of our time have multiplied, on the Continent, objects that unavoidably call forth reflections such as are expressed in these verses, but the Ruins in those countries are too recent to exhibit, in anything like an equal degree, the beauty with which time and nature have invested the remains of our Convents and Abbeys. These verses it will be observed take up the beauty long before it is matured, as one cannot but wish it may be among some of the desolations of Italy, France, and Germany.

YE Trees! whose slender roots entwine  
Altars that piety neglects;

Whose infant arms enclasp the shrine  
Which no devotion now respects;

If not a straggler from the herd  
Here ruminate, nor shrouded bird,  
Chanting her low-voiced hymn, take pride  
In aught that ye would grace or hide—  
How sadly is your love misplaced,  
Fair Trees, your bounty run to waste!

Ye, too, wild Flowers! that no one heeds,  
And ye—full often spurned as weeds—



In beauty clothed, or breathing sweetness  
 From fractured arch and mouldering wall—  
 Do but more touchingly recall  
 Man's headstrong violence and Time's  
     fleetness,  
 Making the precincts ye adorn  
 Appear to sight still more forlorn.

## XXIV

## IN LOMBARDY

SEE, where his difficult way that Old Man  
     wins  
 Bent by a load of Mulberry leaves!—most  
     hard  
 Appears *his* lot, to the small Worm's com-  
     pared,  
 For whom his toil with early day begins.  
 Acknowledging no task-master, at will  
 (As if her labour and her ease were twins)  
*She* seems to work, at pleasure to lie still;—  
 And softly sleeps within the thread she  
     spins.  
 So fare they—the Man serving as her Slave.  
 Ere long their fates do each to each con-  
     form:  
 Both pass into new being,—but the Worm,  
 Transfigured, sinks into a hopeless grave;  
*His* volant Spirit will, he trusts, ascend  
 To bliss unbounded, glory without end.

## XXV

## AFTER LEAVING ITALY

I had proof in several instances that the  
 Carbonari, if I may still call them so, and their  
 favourers, are opening their eyes to the necessity  
 of patience, and are intent upon spreading know-  
 ledge actively but quietly as they can. May  
 they have resolution to continue in this course!  
 for it is the only one by which they can truly  
 benefit their country. We left Italy by the way  
 which is called the "Nuova Strada de Allmagna,"  
 to the east of the high passes of the Alps, which  
 take you at once from Italy into Switzerland.  
 This road leads across several smaller heights,  
 and winds down different vales in succession, so  
 that it was only by the accidental sound of a few  
 German words that I was aware we had quitted  
 Italy, and hence the unwelcome shock alluded to  
 in the two or three last lines of the latter sonnet.

FAIR Land! Thee all men greet with joy;  
     how few,

Whose souls take pride in freedom, virtue,  
     fame,  
 Part from thee without pity dyed in shame:  
 I could not—while from Venice we with-  
     drew,  
 Led on till an Alpine strait confined our  
     view  
 Within its depths, and to the shore we  
     came  
 Of Lago Morto, dreary sight and name,  
 Which o'er sad thoughts a sadder colouring  
     threw,  
 Italia! on the surface of thy spirit,  
 (Too aptly emblemed by that torpid lake)  
 Shall a few partial breezes only creep?—  
 Be its depths quickened; what thou dost  
     inherit  
 Of the world's hopes, dare to fulfil; awake,  
 Mother of Heroes, from thy death-like  
     sleep!

## XXVI

## CONTINUED

As indignation mastered grief, my tongue  
 Spake bitter words; words that did ill  
     agree  
 With those rich stores of Nature's imagery,  
 And divine Art, that fast to memory  
     clung—  
 Thy gifts, magnificent Region, ever young  
 In the sun's eye, and in his sister's sight  
 How beautiful! how worthy to be sung  
 In strains of rapture, or subdued delight!  
 I feign not; witness that unwelcome shock  
 That followed the first sound of German  
     speech,  
 Caught the far-winding barrier Alps among.  
 In that announcement, greeting seemed to  
     mock  
 Parting; the casual word had power to  
     reach  
 My heart, and filled that heart with conflict  
     strong.

AT BOLOGNA, IN REMEMBRANCE  
 OF THE LATE INSURRECTIONS,  
 1837

1

AH why deceive ourselves! by no mere fit  
 Of sudden passion roused shall men attain

True freedom where for ages they have lain  
Bound in a dark abominable pit,  
With life's best sinews more and more un-  
knit.

Here, there, a banded few who loathe the  
chain

May rise to break it; effort worse than vain  
For thee, O great Italian nation, split  
Into those jarring fractions.—Let thy scope  
Be one fixed mind for all; thy rights  
approve

To thy own conscience gradually renewed;  
Learn to make Time the father of wise  
Hope;

Then trust thy cause to the arm of Fortitude,  
The light of Knowledge, and the warmth  
of Love.

## CONTINUED

## II

HARD task! exclaim the undisciplined, to  
lean

On Patience coupled with such slow en-  
deavour,

That long-lived servitude must last for ever.  
Perish the grovelling few, who, prest  
between

Wrongs and the terror of redress, would  
wean

Millions from glorious aims. Our chains  
to sever

Let us break forth in tempest now or  
never!—

What, is there then no space for golden  
mean

And gradual progress?—Twilight leads to  
day,

And, even within the burning zones of  
earth,

The hastiest sunrise yields a temperate ray;  
The softest breeze to fairest flowers gives  
birth:

Think not that Prudence dwells in dark  
abodes,

She scans the future with the eye of gods.

## CONCLUDED

## III

As leaves are to the tree whereon they grow  
And wither, every human generation

Is, to the Being of a mighty nation,  
Locked in our world's embrace through  
weal and woe;

Thought that should teach the zealot to  
forego

Rash schemes, to abjure all selfish agita-  
tion,

And seek through noiseless pains and  
moderation

The unblemished good they only can  
bestow.

Alas! with most, who weigh futurity  
Against time present, passion holds the  
scales:

Hence equal ignorance of both prevails,  
And nations sink; or, struggling to be free,  
Are doomed to flounder on, like wounded  
whales

Tossed on the bosom of a stormy sea.

"WHAT IF OUR NUMBERS BARELY  
COULD DEFY"

WHAT if our numbers barely could defy  
The arithmetic of babes, must foreign  
hordes,

Slaves, vile as ever were befooled by words,  
Striking through English breasts the  
anarchy

Of Terror, bear us to the ground, and tie  
Our hands behind our backs with felon  
cords?

Yields every thing to discipline of swords?  
Is man as good as man, none low, none  
high?—

Nor discipline nor valour can withstand  
The shock, nor quell the inevitable rout,  
When in some great extremity breaks out  
A people, on their own beloved Land  
Risen, like one man, to combat in the sight  
Of a just God for liberty and right.

1837.

## A NIGHT THOUGHT

These verses were thrown off extempore upon  
leaving Mrs. Luff's house at Fox-Ghyll, one  
evening. The good woman is not disposed to  
look at the bright side of things, and there hap-  
pened to be present certain ladies who had reached  
the point of life where *youth* is ended, and who  
seemed to contend with each other in expressing  
their dislike of the country and climate. One of  
them had been heard to say she could not endure

a country where there was "neither sunshine nor cavaliers."

Lo ! where the Moon along the sky  
Sails with her happy destiny ;  
Oft is she hid from mortal eye

Or dimly seen,  
But when the clouds asunder fly  
How bright her mien !

Far different we—a froward race,  
Thousands though rich in Fortune's grace  
With cherished sullenness of pace

Their way pursue,  
Ingrates who wear a smileless face  
The whole year through.

If kindred humours e'er would make  
My spirit droop for drooping's sake,  
From Fancy following in thy wake,  
Bright ship of heaven !  
A counter impulse let me take  
And be forgiven. 1837.

#### TO THE PLANET VENUS

Upon its approximation (as an Evening Star)  
to the Earth, Jan. 1838.

WHAT strong allurements draws, what spirit  
guides,

Thee, Vesper ! brightening still, as if the  
nearer

Thou com'st to man's abode the spot grew  
dearer

Night after night ? True is it Nature hides  
Her treasures less and less.—Man now pre-  
sides

In power, where once he trembled in his  
weakness ;

Science advances with gigantic strides ;  
But are we aught enriched in love and  
meekness ?

Aught dost thou see, bright Star ! of pure  
and wise

More than in humbler times graced human  
story ;

That makes our hearts more apt to sym-  
pathise

With heaven, our souls more fit for future  
glory,

When earth shall vanish from our closing  
eyes,

Ere we lie down in our last dormitory ?  
1838.

#### COMPOSED AT RYDAL ON MAY MORNING, 1838

This and the sonnet entitled "The Pillar of  
Trajan," p. 652, were composed on what we call  
the "Far Terrace" at Rydal Mount, where I  
have murmured out many thousands of verses.

If with old love of you, dear Hills ! I share  
New love of many a rival image brought  
From far, forgive the wanderings of my  
thought :

Nor art thou wronged, sweet May ! when I  
compare

Thy present birth-morn with thy last, so  
fair,

So rich to me in favours. For my lot  
Then was, within the famed Egerian Grot  
To sit and muse, fanned by its dewy air  
Mingling with thy soft breath ! That morn-  
ing too,

Warblers I heard their joy unbosoming  
Amid the sunny, shadowy, Colyseum ;  
Heard them, unchecked by aught of sadden-  
ing hue,

For victories there won by flower-crowned  
Spring,

Chant in full choir their innocent Te Deum.

#### COMPOSED ON A MAY MORNING, 1838

LIFE with yon Lambs, like day, is just  
begun,

Yet Nature seems to them a heavenly  
guide.

Does joy approach ? they meet the coming  
tide ;

And sullenness avoid, as now they shun  
Pale twilight's lingering glooms,—and in  
the sun

Couch near their dams, with quiet satisfied ;  
Or gambol—each with his shadow at his  
side,

Varying its shape wherever he may run.  
As they from turf yet hoar with sleepy dew  
All turn, and court the shining and the  
green,

Where herbs look up, and opening flowers  
are seen ;

Why to God's goodness cannot We be true.  
And so, His gifts and promises between.

Feed to the last on pleasures ever new ?

"HARK ! 'TIS THE THRUSH,  
UNDAUNTED, UNDEPREST"

HARK ! 'tis the Thrush, undaunted, unde-  
prest,  
By twilight premature of cloud and rain ;  
Nor does that roaring wind deaden his  
strain

Who carols thinking of his Love and nest,  
And seems, as more incited, still more blest.  
Thanks ; thou hast snapped a fireside  
Prisoner's chain,  
Exulting Warbler ! eased a fretted brain,  
And in a moment charmed my cares to  
rest.

Yes, I will forth, bold Bird ! and front the  
blast,

That we may sing together, if thou wilt,  
So loud, so clear, my Partner through life's  
day,

Mute in her nest love-chosen, if not love-  
built

Like thine, shall gladden, as in seasons  
past,

Thrilled by loose snatches of the social Lay.

RYDAL MOUNT, 1838.

"'TIS HE WHOSE YESTER-  
EVENING'S HIGH DISDAIN"

'Tis He whose yester-evening's high disdain  
Beat back the roaring storm—but how  
subdued

His day-break note, a sad vicissitude !  
Does the hour's drowsy weight his glee  
restrain ?

Or, like the nightingale, her joyous vein  
Pleased to renounce, does this dear Thrush  
attune

His voice to suit the temper of yon Moon  
Doubly depressed, setting, and in her wane ?  
Rise, tardy Sun ! and let the Songster  
prove

(The balance trembling between night and  
morn

No longer) with what ecstasy upborne  
He can pour forth his spirit. In heaven  
above,

And earth below, they best can serve true  
gladness

Who meet most feelingly the calls of sadness.  
1838.

"OH WHAT A WRECK ! HOW  
CHANGED IN MIEN AND SPEECH !"

The sad condition of poor Mrs. Southey put  
me upon writing this. It has afforded comfort to  
many persons whose friends have been similarly  
affected.

OH what a Wreck ! how changed in mien  
and speech !

Yet—though dread Powers, that work in  
mystery, spin

Entanglings of the brain ; though shadows  
stretch

O'er the chilled heart—reflect ; far, far  
within

Hers is a holy Being, freed from Sin.

She is not what she seems, a forlorn wretch ;  
But delegated Spirits comfort fetch

To Her from heights that Reason may not  
win.

Like Children, She is privileged to hold  
Divine communion ; both do live and move,  
Whate'er to shallow Faith their ways un-  
fold,

Inly illumined by Heaven's pitying love ;  
Love pitying innocence not long to last,  
In them—in Her our sins and sorrows past.  
1838.

A PLEA FOR AUTHORS, MAY 1838

FAILING impartial measure to dispense

To every suitor, Equity is lame ;

And social Justice, stript of reverence

For natural rights, a mockery and a shame ;

Law but a servile dupe of false pretence,

If, guarding grossest things from common  
claim

Now and for ever, She, to works that came  
From mind and spirit, grudge a short-lived  
fence.

"What ! lengthened privilege, a lineal tie,  
For Books !" Yes, heartless Ones, or be  
it proved

That 'tis a fault in Us to have lived and  
loved

Like others, with like temporal hopes to  
die ;

No public harm that Genius from her course  
Be turned ; and streams of truth dried up,  
even at their source !

## A POET TO HIS GRANDCHILD

## SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING

"SON of my buried Son, while thus thy  
hand  
"Is clasping mine, it saddens me to think  
"How Want may press thee down, and  
with thee sink  
"Thy children left unfit, through vain  
demand  
"Of culture, even to feel or understand  
"My simplest Lay that to their memory  
"May cling;—hard fate! which haply  
need not be  
"Did Justice mould the statutes of the  
Land.  
"A Book time-cherished and an honoured  
name  
"Are high rewards; but bound they  
Nature's claim  
"Or Reason's? No—hopes spun in timid  
line  
"From out the bosom of a modest home  
"Extend through unambitious years to  
come,  
"My careless Little-one, for thee and  
thine!"

May 23, 1838.

"BLEST STATESMAN HE, WHOSE  
MIND'S UNSELFISH WILL"

BLEST Statesman He, whose Mind's un-  
selfish will  
Leaves him at ease among grand thoughts:  
whose eye  
Sees that, apart from magnanimity,  
Wisdom exists not; nor the humbler skill  
Of Prudence, disentangling good and ill  
With patient care. What tho' assaults run  
high,  
They daunt not him who holds his ministry,  
Resolute, at all hazards, to fulfil  
Its duties;—prompt to move, but firm to  
wait,—  
Knowing, things rashly sought are rarely  
found;  
That, for the functions of an ancient State—  
Strong by her charters, free because im-  
bound,

Servant of Providence, not slave of Fate—  
Perilous is sweeping change, all chance un-  
sound.<sup>1</sup> 1838.

## VALEDICTORY SONNET

Closing the Volume of Sonnets published in 1838.

SERVING no haughty Muse, my hands have  
here  
Disposed some cultured Flowerets (drawn  
from spots  
Where they bloomed singly, or in scattered  
knots),  
Each kind in several beds of one parterre;  
Both to allure the casual Loiterer,  
And that, so placed, my Nurslings may re-  
quite  
Studious regard with opportune delight,  
Nor be unthanked, unless I fondly err.  
But metaphor dismissed, and thanks apart,  
Reader, farewell! My last words let them  
be—  
If in this book Fancy and Truth agree;  
If simple Nature trained by careful Art  
Through It have won a passage to thy  
heart;  
Grant me thy love, I crave no other fee!  
1838.

## PROTEST AGAINST THE BALLOT

FORTH rushed from Envy sprung and Self-  
conceit,  
A Power misnamed the SPIRIT of REFORM,  
And through the astonished Island swept  
in storm,  
Threatening to lay all orders at her feet  
That crossed her way. Now stoops she to  
entreat  
Licence to hide at intervals her head  
Where she may work, safe, undisquieted,  
In a close Box, covert for Justice meet.  
St. George of England! keep a watchful  
eye  
Fixed on the Suitor; frustrate her request—  
Stifle her hope; for, if the State comply,  
From such Pandorian gift may come a Pest  
Worse than the Dragon that bowed low his  
crest,  
Pierced by thy spear in glorious victory.  
1838.

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

SONNETS  
UPON THE PUNISHMENT OF  
DEATH  
IN SERIES

1839

I

SUGGESTED BY THE VIEW OF LANCASTER  
CASTLE (ON THE ROAD FROM THE  
SOUTH)

THIS Spot—at once unfolding sight so fair  
Of sea and land, with yon grey towers that  
still

Rise up as if to lord it over air—  
Might soothe in human breasts the sense of  
ill,

Or charm it out of memory; yea, might fill  
The heart with joy and gratitude to God  
For all his bounties upon man bestowed:  
Why bears it then the name of "Weeping  
Hill"?

Thousands, as toward yon old Lancastrian  
Towers,

A prison's crown, along this way they past  
For lingering durance or quick death with  
shame,

From this bare eminence thereon have cast  
Their first look—blinded as tears fell in  
showers

Shed on their chains; and hence that  
doleful name.

II

TENDERLY do we feel by Nature's law  
For worst offenders: though the heart will  
heave

With indignation, deeply moved we grieve,  
In after thought, for Him who stood in awe  
Neither of God nor man, and only saw,  
Lost wretch, a horrible device enthroned  
On proud temptations, till the victim  
groaned

Under the steel his hand had dared to  
draw.

But oh, restrain compassion, if its course,  
As oft befalls, prevent or turn aside  
Judgments and aims and acts whose higher  
source

Is sympathy with the unforewarned, who  
died

Blameless—with them that shuddered o'er  
his grave,  
And all who from the law firm safety crave.

III

THE Roman Consul doomed his sons to  
die

Who had betrayed their country. The  
stern word

Afforded (may it through all time afford)

A theme for praise and admiration high.

Upon the surface of humanity

He rested not; its depths his mind explored;

He felt; but his parental bosom's lord

Was Duty,—Duty calmed his agony.

And some, we know, when they by wilful  
act

A single human life have wrongly taken,

Pass sentence on themselves, confess the  
fact,

And, to atone for it, with soul unshaken

Kneel at the feet of Justice, and, for faith

Broken with all mankind, solicit death.

IV

Is *Death*, when evil against good has fought

With such fell mastery that a man may dare

By deeds the blackest purpose to lay bare?

Is *Death*, for one to that condition brought,

For him, or any one, the thing that ought

To be *most* dreaded? Lawgivers, beware,

Lest, capital pains remitting till ye spare

The murderer, ye, by sanction to that  
thought

Seemingly given, debase the general mind;

Tempt the vague who tried standards to  
disown,

Nor only palpable restraints unbind,

But upon Honour's head disturb the crown,

Whose absolute rule permits not to with-  
stand

In the weak love of life his least command.

V

NOT to the object specially designed,

Howe'er momentous in itself it be,

Good to promote or curb depravity,

Is the wise Legislator's view confined.

His Spirit, when most severe, is oft most  
kind;

As all Authority in earth depends  
On Love and Fear, their several powers he  
    blends,  
Copying with awe the one Paternal mind.  
Uncaught by processes in show humane,  
He feels how far the act would derogate  
From even the humblest functions of the  
    State;  
If she, self-shorn of Majesty, ordain  
That never more shall hang upon her breath  
The last alternative of Life or Death.

## VI

YE brood of conscience—Spectres! that  
    frequent  
The bad Man's restless walk, and haunt  
    his bed—  
Fiends in your aspect, yet beneficent  
In act, as hovering Angels when they spread  
Their wings to guard the unconscious  
    Innocent—  
Slow be the Statutes of the land to share  
A laxity that could not but impair  
Your power to punish crime, and so pre-  
    vent.  
And ye, Beliefs! coiled serpent-like about  
The adage on all tongues, "Murder will  
    out,"  
How shall your ancient warnings work for  
    good  
In the full might they hitherto have shown,  
If for deliberate shedder of man's blood  
Survive not Judgment that requires his own?

## VII

BEFORE the world had past her time of  
    youth  
While polity and discipline were weak,  
The precept eye for eye, and tooth for tooth,  
Came forth—a light, though but as of day-  
    break,  
Strong as could then be borne. A Master  
    meek  
Proscribed the spirit fostered by that rule,  
Patience *his* law, long-suffering *his* school,  
And love the end, which all through peace  
    must seek.  
But lamentably do they err who strain  
His mandates, given rash impulse to con-  
    trol  
And keep vindictive thirstings from the soul,

So far that, if consistent in their scheme,  
They must forbid the State to inflict a pain.  
Making of social order a mere dream.

## VIII

FIT retribution, by the moral code  
Determined, lies beyond the State's embrace.  
Yet, as she may, for each peculiar case  
She plants well-measured terrors in the road  
Of wrongful acts. Downward it is and  
    broad,  
And, the main fear once doomed to  
    banishment,  
Far oftener then, bad ushering worse event  
Blood would be spilt that in his dark abode  
Crime might lie better hid. And, should  
    the change  
Take from the horror due to a foul deed,  
Pursuit and evidence so far must fail,  
And, guilt escaping, passion then might  
    plead  
In angry spirits for her old free range,  
And the "wild justice of revenge" prevail.

## IX

THOUGH to give timely warning and deter  
Is one great aim of penalty, extend  
Thy mental vision further and ascend  
Far higher, else full surely shalt thou err.  
What is a State? The wise behold in her  
A creature born of time, that keeps one  
    eye  
Fixed on the statutes of Eternity,  
To which her judgments reverently defer.  
Speaking through Law's dispassionate voice  
    the State  
Endues her conscience with external life  
And being, to preclude or quell the strife  
Of individual will, to elevate  
The grovelling mind, the erring to recall,  
And fortify the moral sense of all.

## X

OUR bodily life, some plead, that life the  
    shrine  
Of an immortal spirit, is a gift  
So sacred, so informed with light divine,  
That no tribunal, though most wise to sift  
Deed and intent, should turn the Being  
    adrift  
Into that world where penitential tear

May not avail, nor prayer have for God's  
ear  
A voice—that world whose veil no hand  
can lift  
For earthly sight. "Eternity and Time,"  
They urge, "have interwoven claims and  
rights  
Not to be jeopardised through foulest crime;  
The sentence rule by mercy's heaven-born  
lights."  
Even so; but measuring not by finite sense  
Infinite Power, perfect Intelligence.

## XI

AH, think how one compelled for life to  
abide  
Locked in a dungeon needs must eat the  
heart  
Out of his own humanity, and part  
With every hope that mutual cares provide;  
And, should a less unnatural doom confide  
In life-long exile on a savage coast,  
Soon the relapsing penitent may boast  
Of yet more heinous guilt, with fiercer pride.  
Hence thoughtful Mercy, Mercy sage and  
pure,  
Sanctions the forfeiture that Law demands,  
Leaving the final issue in *His* hands  
Whose goodness knows no change, whose  
love is sure,  
Who sees, foresees; who cannot judge  
amiss,  
And wafts at will the contrite soul to bliss.

## XII

SEE the Condemned alone within his cell  
And prostrate at some moment when re-  
morse  
Stings to the quick, and, with resistless  
force,  
Assaults the pride she strove in vain to  
quell.  
Then mark him, him who could so long  
rebel,  
The crime confessed, a kneeling Penitent  
Before the Altar, where the Sacrament  
Softens his heart, till from his eyes outwell  
Tears of salvation. Welcome death! while  
Heaven  
Does in this change exceedingly rejoice;  
While yet the solemn heed the State hath  
given

Helps him to meet the last Tribunal's voice  
In faith, which fresh offences, were he cast  
On old temptations, might for ever blast.

## XIII

## CONCLUSION

YES, though He well may tremble at the  
sound  
Of his own voice, who from the judgment-  
seat  
Sends the pale Convict to his last retreat  
In death; though Listeners shudder all  
around,  
They know the dread requital's source pro-  
found;  
Nor is, they feel, its wisdom obsolete—  
(Would that it were!) the sacrifice unmeet  
For Christian Faith. But hopeful signs  
abound;  
The social rights of man breathe purer air,  
Religion deepens her preventive care;  
Then, moved by needless fear of past abuse,  
Strike not from Law's firm hand that awful  
rod,  
But leave it thence to drop for lack of use:  
Oh, speed the blessed hour, Almighty God!

## XIV

## APOLOGY

THE formal World relaxes her cold chain  
For One who speaks in numbers; ampler  
scope  
His utterance finds; and, conscious of the  
gain,  
Imagination works with bolder hope  
The cause of grateful reason to sustain;  
And, serving Truth, the heart more strongly  
beats  
Against all barriers which his labour meets  
In lofty place, or humble Life's domain.  
Enough;—before us lay a painful road,  
And guidance have I sought in duteous love  
From Wisdom's heavenly Father. Hence  
hath flowed  
Patience, with trust that, whatsoe'er the way  
Each takes in this high matter, all may  
move  
Cheered with the prospect of a brighter  
day.



ON A PORTRAIT OF I. F., PAINTED  
BY MARGARET GILLIES

WE gaze—nor grieve to think that we must  
die,  
But that the precious love this friend hath  
sown  
Within our hearts, the love whose flower  
hath blown  
Bright as if heaven were ever in its eye,  
Will pass so soon from human memory;  
And not by strangers to our blood alone,  
But by our best descendants be unknown,  
Unthought of—this may surely claim a sigh.  
Yet, blessed Art, we yield not to dejection;  
Thou against Time so feelingly dost strive.  
Where'er, preserved in this most true reflection,  
An image of her soul is kept alive,  
Some lingering fragrance of the pure affection,  
Whose flower with us will vanish, must  
survive.

RYDAL MOUNT,  
*New Year's Day, 1840.*

TO I. F.

THE star which comes at close of day to  
shine  
More heavenly bright than when it leads  
the morn,  
Is friendship's emblem, whether the forlorn  
She visiteth, or, shedding light benign  
Through shades that solemnize Life's calm  
decline,  
Doth make the happy happier. This have  
we  
Learnt, Isabel, from thy society,  
Which now we too unwillingly resign  
Though for brief absence. But farewell!  
the page  
Glimmers before my sight through thankful  
tears,  
Such as start forth, not seldom, to approve  
Our truth, when we, old yet unchilled by  
age,  
Call thee, though known but for a few fleet  
years,  
The heart-affectioned sister of our love!

RYDAL MOUNT, *Feb. 1840.*

POOR ROBIN<sup>1</sup>

I often ask myself what will become of Rydal Mount after our day. Will the old walls and steps remain in front of the house and about the grounds, or will they be swept away with all the beautiful mosses and ferns and wild geraniums and other flowers which their rude construction suffered and encouraged to grow among them?—This little wild flower—"Poor Robin"—is here constantly courting my attention, and exciting what may be called a domestic interest with the varying aspects of its stalks and leaves and flowers. Strangely do the tastes of men differ according to their employment and habits of life. "What a nice well would that be," said a labouring man to me one day, "if all that rubbish was cleared off." The "*rubbish*" was some of the most beautiful mosses and lichens and ferns and other wild growths that could possibly be seen. Defend us from the tyranny of trimness and neatness showing itself in this way! Chatterton says of freedom—"Upon her head wild weeds were spread;" and depend upon it if "the marvellous boy" had undertaken to give Flora a garland, he would have preferred what we are apt to call weeds to garden-flowers. True taste has an eye for both. Weeds have been called flowers out of place. I fear the place most people would assign to them is too limited. Let them come near to our abodes, as surely they may without impropriety or disorder.

Now when the primrose makes a splendid  
show,  
And lilies face the March-winds in full blow,  
And humbler growths as moved with one  
desire  
Put on, to welcome spring, their best attire,  
Poor Robin is yet flowerless; but how gay  
With his red stalks upon this sunny day!  
And, as his tufts of leaves he spreads, content  
With a hard bed and scanty nourishment,  
Mixed with the green, some shine not  
lacking power  
To rival summer's brightest scarlet flower;  
And flowers they well might seem to  
passers-by  
If looked at only with a careless eye;  
Flowers—or a richer produce (did it suit  
The season) sprinklings of ripe strawberry  
fruit.

<sup>1</sup> The small wild Geranium known by that name.

But while a thousand pleasures come unsought,

Why fix upon his wealth or want a thought?  
Is the string touched in prelude to a lay  
Of pretty fancies that would round him play  
When all the world acknowledged elfin sway?

Or does it suit our humour to commend  
Poor Robin as a sure and crafty friend,  
Whose practice teaches, spite of names to show

Bright colours whether they deceive or no?—  
Nay, we would simply praise the free goodwill

With which, though slighted, he, on naked hill

Or in warm valley, seeks his part to fill;  
Cheerful alike if bare of flowers as now,  
Or when his tiny gems shall deck his brow:  
Yet more, we wish that men by men despised,

And such as lift their foreheads overprized,  
Should sometimes think, where'er they chance to spy

This child of Nature's own humility,  
What recompense is kept in store or left  
For all that seem neglected or bereft;  
With what nice care equivalents are given,  
How just, how bountiful, the hand of Heaven.  
*March 1840.*

#### ON A PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON UPON THE FIELD OF WATERLOO, BY HAYDON

This was composed while I was ascending Helvellyn in company with my daughter and her husband. She was on horseback and rode to the top of the hill without once dismounting, a feat which it was scarcely possible to perform except during a season of dry weather; and a guide, with whom we fell in on the mountain, told us he believed it had never been accomplished before by any one.

By Art's bold privilege Warrior and Warhorse stand

On ground yet strewn with their last battle's wreck;

Let the Steed glory while his Master's hand  
Lies fixed for ages on his conscious neck;  
But by the Chieftain's look, though at his side

Hangs that day's treasured sword, how firm a check

Is given to triumph and all human pride!  
Yon trophied Mound shrinks to a shadowy speck

In his calm presence! Him the mighty deed

Elates not, brought far nearer the grave's rest,

As shows that time-worn face, for he such seed

Has sown as yields, we trust, the fruit of fame

In Heaven; hence no one blushes for thy name,

Conqueror, 'mid some sad thoughts, divinely blest!  
*1840.*

#### TO A PAINTER

The picture which gave occasion to this and the following Sonnet was from the pencil of Miss M. Gillies, who resided for several weeks under our roof at Rydal Mount.

ALL praise the Likeness by thy skill portrayed;

But 'tis a fruitless task to paint for me,  
Who, yielding not to changes Time has made,

By the habitual light of memory see  
Eyes unbedimmed, see bloom that cannot fade,

And smiles that from their birth-place ne'er shall flee

Into the land where ghosts and phantoms be;

And, seeing this, own nothing in its stead.  
Couldst thou go back into far-distant years,  
Or share with me, fond thought! that inward eye,

Then, and then only, Painter! couldst thy Art

The visual powers of Nature satisfy,  
Which hold, whate'er to common sight appears,

Their sovereign empire in a faithful heart.  
*1841.*

#### ON THE SAME SUBJECT

THOUGH I beheld at first with blank surprise

This Work, I now have gazed on it so long

I see its truth with reluctant eyes ;  
O, my Beloved ! I have done thee wrong,  
Conscious of blessedness, but, whence it  
sprung,

Ever too heedless, as I now perceive :  
Morn into noon did pass, noon into eve,  
And the old day was welcome as the young,  
As welcome, and as beautiful—in sooth  
More beautiful, as being a thing more holy :  
Thanks to thy virtues, to the eternal youth  
Of all thy goodness, never melancholy ;  
To thy large heart and humble mind, that  
cast

Into one vision, future, present, past.  
1841.

### “WHEN SEVERN'S SWEEPING FLOOD HAD OVERTHROWN”

WHEN Severn's sweeping flood had over-  
thrown

St. Mary's Church, the preacher then  
would cry :—

“Thus, Christian people, God his might  
hath shown

That ye to him your love may testify ;  
Haste, and rebuild the pile.”—But not a  
stone

Resumed its place. Age after age went by,  
And Heaven still lacked its due, though  
piety

In secret did, we trust, her loss bemoan.  
But now her Spirit hath put forth its claim  
In Power, and Poesy would lend her voice ;  
Let the new Church be worthy of its aim,  
That in its beauty Cardiff may rejoice !  
Oh ! in the past if cause there was for  
shame,

Let not our times halt in their better choice.

RYDAL MOUNT,  
*Jan. 23, 1842.*

### “INTENT ON GATHERING WOOL FROM HEDGE AND BRAKE”

Suggested by a conversation with Miss Fen-  
wick, who along with her sister had, during their  
childhood, found much delight in such gatherings  
for the purposes here alluded to.

INTENT on gathering wool from hedge and  
brake  
Von busy Little-ones rejoice that soon

A poor old Dame will bless them for the  
boon :

Great is their glee while flake they add to  
flake

With rival earnestness ; far other strife  
Than will hereafter move them, if they make  
Pastime their idol, give their day of life  
To pleasure snatched for reckless pleasure's  
sake.

Can pomp and show allay one heart-born  
grief ?

Pains which the World inflicts can she  
requite ?

Not for an interval however brief ;  
The silent thoughts that search for steadfast  
light,

Love from her depths, and Duty in her  
might,

And Faith—these only yield secure relief.

*March 8, 1842.*

### PRELUDE

PREFIXED TO THE VOLUME ENTITLED  
“POEMS CHIEFLY OF EARLY AND LATE  
YEARS”

These verses were begun while I was on a  
visit to my son John at Brigham, and were fin-  
ished at Rydal. As the contents of the volume,  
to which they are now prefixed, will be assigned  
to their respective classes when my poems shall  
be collected in one volume, I should be at a loss  
where with propriety to place this prelude, being  
too restricted in its bearing to serve for a preface  
for the whole. The lines towards the conclusion  
allude to the discontents then fomented through  
the country by the agitators of the Anti-Corn-  
Law League: the particular causes of such  
troubles are transitory, but disposition to excite  
and liability to be excited are nevertheless per-  
manent, and therefore proper objects for the  
poet's regard.

In desultory walk through orchard grounds,  
Or some deep chestnut grove, oft have I  
paused

The while a Thrush, urged rather than  
restrained

By gusts of vernal storm, attuned his song  
To his own genial instincts ; and was heard  
(Though not without some plaintive tones  
between)

To utter, above showers of blossom swept  
 From tossing boughs, the promise of a  
   calm,  
 Which the unsheltered traveller might  
   receive  
 With thankful spirit. The descant, and  
   the wind  
 That seemed to play with it in love or  
   scorn,  
 Encouraged and endeared the strain of  
   words  
 That haply flowed from me, by fits of  
   silence  
 Impelled to livelier pace. But now, my  
   Book !  
 Charged with those lays, and others of like  
   mood,  
 Or loftier pitch if higher rose the theme,  
 Go, single—yet aspiring to be joined  
 With thy Forerunners that through many  
   a year  
 Have faithfully prepared each other's way—  
 Go forth upon a mission best fulfilled  
 When and wherever, in this changeful  
   world,  
 Power hath been given to please for higher  
   ends  
 Than pleasure only ; gladdening to prepare  
 For wholesome sadness, troubling to refine,  
 Calming to raise ; and, by a sapient Art  
 Diffused through all the mysteries of our  
   Being,  
 Softening the toils and pains that have not  
   ceased  
 To cast their shadows on our mother Earth  
 Since the primeval doom. Such is the  
   grace  
 Which, though unsued for, fails not to  
   descend  
 With heavenly inspiration ; such the aim  
 That Reason dictates ; and, as even the  
   wish  
 Has virtue in it, why should hope to me  
 Be wanting that sometimes, where fancied  
   ills  
 Harass the mind and strip from off the  
   bowers  
 Of private life their natural pleasantness,  
 A Voice—devoted to the love whose seeds  
 Are sown in every human breast, to beauty  
 Lodged within compass of the humblest  
   sight,  
 To cheerful intercourse with wood and  
   field,

And sympathy with man's substantial  
 griefs—

Will not be heard in vain ? And in those  
 days

When unforeseen distress spreads far and  
 wide

Among a People mournfully cast down,  
 Or into anger roused by venal words  
 In recklessness flung out to overturn  
 The judgment, and divert the general heart  
 From mutual good—some strain of thine,  
   my Book !

Caught at propitious intervals, may win  
 Listeners who not unwillingly admit  
 Kindly emotion tending to console  
 And reconcile ; and both with young and  
   old

Exalt the sense of thoughtful gratitude  
 For benefits that still survive, by faith  
 In progress, under laws divine, maintained.

RYDAL MOUNT,

*March 26, 1842.*

## FLOATING ISLAND

My poor sister takes a pleasure in repeating  
 these verses, which she composed not long before  
 the beginning of her sad illness.

These lines are by the Author of the "Address  
 to the Wind," etc., published heretofore along  
 with my Poems.

HARMONIOUS Powers with Nature work  
 On sky, earth, river, lake and sea ;  
 Sunshine and cloud, whirlwind and breeze,  
 All in one duteous task agree.

Once did I see a slip of earth  
 (By throbbing waves long undermined)  
 Loosed from its hold ; how, no one knew,  
 But all might see it float, obedient to the  
   wind ;

Might see it, from the mossy shore  
 Dissevered, float upon the Lake,  
 Float with its crest of trees adorned  
 On which the warbling birds their pastime  
   take.

Food, shelter, safety, there they find ;  
 There berries ripen, flowerets bloom ;  
 There insects live their lives, and die ;  
 A peopled world it is ; in size a tiny room.

And thus through many seasons' space  
This little Island may survive;  
But Nature, though we mark her not,  
Will take away, may cease to give.

Perchance when you are wandering forth  
Upon some vacant sunny day,  
Without an object, hope, or fear,  
Thither your eyes may turn—the Isle is  
passed away;

Buried beneath the glittering Lake,  
Its place no longer to be found;  
Yet the lost fragments shall remain  
To fertilize some other ground. 1842.

### "THE CRESCENT-MOON, THE STAR OF LOVE"

THE Crescent-moon, the Star of Love,  
Glories of evening, as ye there are seen  
With but a span of sky between—  
Speak one of you, my doubts remove,  
Which is the attendant Page and which the  
Queen? 1842.

### TO A REDBREAST—(IN SICKNESS)

Almost the only verses by our lamented Sister  
Sara Hutchinson.

STAY, little cheerful Robin! stay,  
And at my casement sing,  
Though it should prove a farewell lay  
And this our parting spring.

Though I, alas! may ne'er enjoy  
The promise in thy song;  
A charm, *that* thought can not destroy,  
Doth to thy strain belong.

Methinks that in my dying hour  
Thy song would still be dear,  
And with a more than earthly power  
My passing Spirit cheer.

Then, little Bird, this boon confer,  
Come, and my requiem sing,  
Nor fail to be the harbinger  
Of everlasting Spring. 1842.

### MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

1842

I

I was impelled to write this Sonnet by the disgusting frequency with which the word *artistical*, imported with other impertinences from the Germans, is employed by writers of the present day: for *artistical* let them substitute *artificial*, and the poetry written on this system, both at home and abroad, will be for the most part much better characterised.

A *POET*!—He hath put his heart to school,  
Nor dares to move unpropped upon the  
staff

Which Art hath lodged within his hand—  
must laugh

By precept only, and shed tears by rule.  
Thy Art be Nature; the live current quaff,  
And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,  
In fear that else, when Critics grave and  
cool

Have killed him, Scorn should write his  
epitaph.

How does the Meadow-flower its bloom un-  
fold?

Because the lovely little flower is free  
Down to its root, and, in that freedom,  
bold;

And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree  
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,  
But from its *own* divine vitality.

II

Hundreds of times have I seen, hanging about  
and above the vale of Rydal, clouds that might  
have given birth to this Sonnet, which was thrown  
off on the impulse of the moment one evening  
when I was returning home from the favourite  
walk of ours, along the Rotha, under Loughrigg.

THE most alluring clouds that mount the  
sky

Owe to a troubled element their forms,  
Their hues to sunset. If with raptured eye  
We watch their splendour, shall we covet  
storms,

And wish the Lord of day his slow decline  
Would hasten, that such pomp may float  
on high?

Behold, already they forget to shine,

Dissolve—and leave, to him who gazed, a  
sigh.

Not loth to thank each moment for its boon  
Of pure delight, come whencesoe'er it may,  
Peace let us seek,—to stedfast things  
attune

Calm expectations—leaving to the gay  
And volatile their love of transient bowers,  
The house that cannot pass away be ours.

III

This Sonnet is recommended to the perusal of  
all those who consider that the evils under which  
we groan are to be removed or palliated by mea-  
sures ungoverned by moral and religious prin-  
ciples.

FEEL for the wrongs to universal ken  
Daily exposed, woe that unshrouded lies;  
And seek the Sufferer in his darkest den,  
Whether conducted to the spot by sighs  
And moanings, or he dwells (as if the wren  
Taught him concealment) hidden from all  
eyes

In silence and the awful modesties  
Of sorrow;—feel for all, as brother Men!  
Rest not in hope want's icy chain to thaw  
By casual boons and formal charities;  
Learn to be just, just through impartial  
law;

Far as ye may, erect and equalise;  
And, what ye cannot reach by statute,  
draw

Each from his fountain of self-sacrifice!

IV

IN ALLUSION TO VARIOUS RECENT HIS-  
TORIES AND NOTICES OF THE FRENCH  
REVOLUTION

PORTENTOUS change when History can ap-  
appear

As the cool Advocate of foul device;  
Reckless audacity extol, and jeer  
At consciences perplexed with scruples  
nice!

They who bewail not, must abhor, the  
sneer

Born of Conceit, Power's blind Idolater;  
Or haply sprung from vaunting Cowardice  
Betrayed by mockery of holy fear.

Hath it not long been said the wrath of  
Man

Works not the righteousness of God? Oh  
bend,

Bend, ye Perverse! to judgments from on  
High,

Laws that lay under Heaven's perpetual  
ban

All principles of action that transcend  
The sacred limits of humanity.

V

CONTINUED

WHO ponders National events shall find  
An awful balancing of loss and gain,  
Joy based on sorrow, good with ill com-  
bined,

And proud deliverance issuing out of pain  
And direful throes; as if the All-ruling  
Mind,

With whose perfection it consists to ordain  
Volcanic burst, earthquake, and hurricane,  
Dealt in like sort with feeble human kind  
By laws immutable. But woe for him  
Who thus deceived shall lend an eager hand  
To social havoc. Is not Conscience ours,  
And Truth, whose eye guilt only can make  
dim;

And Will, whose office, by divine command,  
Is to control and check disordered Powers?

VI

CONCLUDED

LONG-FAVOUR'D England! be not thou  
misled

By monstrous theories of alien growth,  
Lest alien frenzy seize thee, waxing wroth,  
Self-smitten till thy garments reek dyed red  
With thy own blood, which tears in torrents  
shed

Fail to wash out, tears flowing ere thy troth  
Be plighted, not to ease but sullen sloth,  
Or wan despair—the ghost of false hope  
fled

Into a shameful grave. Among thy youth,  
My Country! if such warning be held dear,  
Then shall a Veteran's heart be thrilled  
with joy,

One who would gather from eternal truth,

For time and season, rules that work to cheer—  
Not scourge, to save the People—not destroy.

## VII

MEN of the Western World! in Fate's dark book

Whence these opprobrious leaves of dire portent?

Think ye your British Ancestors forsook  
Their native Land, for outrage provident;  
From unsubmitive necks the bridle shook  
To give, in their Descendants, freer vent  
And wider range to passions turbulent,  
To mutual tyranny a deadlier look?

Nay, said a voice, soft as the south wind's breath,

Dive through the stormy surface of the flood

To the great current flowing underneath;  
Explore the countless springs of silent good;

So shall the truth be better understood,  
And thy grieved Spirit brighten strong in faith.<sup>1</sup>

## VIII

Lo! where she stands fixed in a saint-like trance,

One upward hand, as if she needed rest  
From rapture, lying softly on her breast!  
Nor wants her eyeball an ethereal glance;  
But not the less—nay more—that countenance,

While thus illumined, tells of painful strife  
For a sick heart made weary of this life  
By love, long crossed with adverse circumstance.

—Would She were now as when she hoped to pass

At God's appointed hour to them who tread

Heaven's sapphire pavement, yet breathed well content,

Well pleased, her foot should print earth's common grass,

Lived thankful for day's light, for daily bread,

For health, and time in obvious duty spent.

<sup>1</sup> See Notes.

## THE NORMAN BOY

The subject of this poem was sent me by Mrs. Ogle, to whom I was personally unknown, with a hope, on her part that I might be induced to relate the incident in verse; and I do not regret that I took the trouble; for not improbably the fact is illustrative of the boy's early piety, and may concur with my other little pieces on children to produce profitable reflection among my youthful readers. This is said however with an absolute conviction that children will derive most benefit from books which are not unworthy the perusal of persons of any age. I protest with my whole heart against those productions, so abundant in the present day, in which the doings of children are dwelt upon as if they were incapable of being interested in anything else. On this subject I have dwelt at length in the poem on the growth of my own mind.

HIGH on a broad unfertile tract of forest-skirted Down,

Nor kept by Nature for herself, nor made by man his own,

From home and company remote and every playful joy,

Served, tending a few sheep and goats, a ragged Norman Boy.

Him never saw I, nor the spot; but from an English Dame,

Stranger to me and yet my friend, a simple notice came,

With suit that I would speak in verse of that sequestered child

Whom, one bleak winter's day, she met upon the dreary Wild.

His flock, along the woodland's edge with relics sprinkled o'er

Of last night's snow, beneath a sky threatening the fall of more,

Where tufts of herbage tempted each, were busy at their feed,

And the poor Boy was busier still, with work of anxious heed.

There *was* he, where of branches rent and withered and decayed,

For covert from the keen north wind, his hands a hut had made.

A tiny tenement, forsooth, and frail, as needs must be

A thing of such materials framed, by a builder such as he.

The hut stood finished by his pains, nor  
seemingly lacked aught  
That skill or means of his could add, but  
the architect had wrought  
Some limber twigs into a Cross, well-shaped  
with fingers nice,  
To be engrafted on the top of his small  
edifice.

That Cross he now was fastening there, as  
the surest power and best  
For supplying all deficiencies, all wants of  
the rude nest  
In which, from burning heat, or tempest  
driving far and wide,  
The innocent Boy, else shelterless, his lonely  
head must hide.

That Cross belike he also raised as a standard  
for the true  
And faithful service of his heart in the worst  
that might ensue  
Of hardship and distressful fear, amid the  
houseless waste  
Where he, in his poor self so weak, by  
Providence was placed.

—Here, Lady ! might I cease ; but nay,  
let us before we part  
With this dear holy shepherd-boy breathe  
a prayer of earnest heart,  
That unto him, where'er shall lie his life's  
appointed way,  
The Cross, fixed in his soul, may prove an  
all-sufficing stay. 1842.

## THE POET'S DREAM

## SEQUEL TO THE NORMAN BOY

JUST as those final words were penned, the  
sun broke out in power,  
And gladdened all things ; but, as chanced,  
within that very hour,  
Air blackened, thunder growled, fire flashed  
from clouds that hid the sky,  
And, for the Subject of my Verse, I heaved  
a pensive sigh.

Nor could my heart by second thoughts  
from heaviness be cleared,  
For bodied forth before my eyes the cross-  
crowned hut appeared ;

And, while around it storm as fierce seemed  
troubling earth and air,  
I saw, within, the Norman Boy kneeling  
alone in prayer.

The Child, as if the thunder's voice spake  
with articulate call,  
Bowed meekly in submissive fear, before  
the Lord of All ;  
His lips were moving ; and his eyes, up-  
raised to sue for grace,  
With soft illumination cheered the dimness  
of that place.

How beautiful is holiness !—what wonder  
if the sight,  
Almost as vivid as a dream, produced a  
dream at night ?  
It came with sleep and showed the Boy, no  
cherub, not transformed,  
But the poor ragged Thing whose ways my  
human heart had warmed.

Me had the dream equipped with wings, so  
I took him in my arms,  
And lifted from the grassy floor, stilling his  
faint alarms,  
And bore him high through yielding air my  
debt of love to pay,  
By giving him, for both our sakes, an hour  
of holiday.

I whispered, " Yet a little while, dear  
Child ! thou art my own,  
To show thee some delightful thing, in  
country or in town.  
What shall it be ? a mirthful throng ? or  
that holy place and calm  
St. Denis, filled with royal tombs, or the  
Church of Notre Dame ?

St. Ouen's golden Shrine ? Or choose what  
else would please thee most  
Of any wonder Normandy, or all proud  
France, can boast !"  
" My Mother," said the Boy, " was born  
near to a blessed Tree,  
The Chapel Oak of Allonville ; good Angel,  
show it me !"

On wings, from broad and steadfast poise  
let loose by this reply,  
For Allonville, o'er down and dale, away  
then did we fly ;



O'er town and tower we flew, and fields in  
May's fresh verdure drest;  
The wings they did not flag; the Child,  
though grave, was not deprest.

But who shall show, to waking sense, the  
gleam of light that broke  
Forth from his eyes, when first the Boy  
looked down on that huge oak,  
For length of days so much revered, so  
famous where it stands  
For twofold hallowing—Nature's care, and  
work of human hands?

Strong as an Eagle with my charge I glided  
round and round  
The wide-spread boughs, for view of door,  
window, and stair that wound  
Gracefully up the gnarled trunk; nor left  
we unsurveyed  
The pointed steeple peering forth from the  
centre of the shade.

I lighted—opened with soft touch the  
chapel's iron door,  
Past softly, leading in the Boy; and, while  
from roof to floor  
From floor to roof all round his eyes the  
Child with wonder cast,  
Pleasure on pleasure crowded in, each live-  
lier than the last.

For, deftly framed within the trunk, the  
sanctuary showed,  
By light of lamp and precious stones, that  
glimmered here, there glowed,  
Shrine, Altar, Image, Offerings hung in  
sign of gratitude;  
Sight that inspired accordant thoughts;  
and speech I thus renewed:

"Hither the Afflicted come, as thou hast  
heard thy Mother say,  
And, kneeling, supplication make to our  
Lady de la Paix;  
What mournful sighs have here been heard,  
and, when the voice was stopt  
By sudden pangs; what bitter tears have  
on this pavement dropt!

Poor Shepherd of the naked Down, a  
favoured lot is thine,  
Far happier lot, dear Boy, than brings full  
many to this shrine;

From body pains and pains of soul thou  
needest no release,  
Thy hours as they flow on are spent, if not  
in joy, in peace.

Then offer up thy heart to God in thank-  
fulness and praise,  
Give to Him prayers, and many thoughts,  
in thy most busy days;  
And in His sight the fragile Cross, on thy  
small hut, will be  
Holy as that which long hath crowned the  
Chapel of this Tree;

Holy as that far seen which crowns the  
sumptuous Church in Rome  
Where thousands meet to worship God  
under a mighty Dome;  
He sees the bending multitude, he hears  
the choral rites,  
Yet not the less, in children's hymns and  
lonely prayer, delights.

God for his service needeth not proud work  
of human skill;  
They please him best who labour most to  
do in peace his will:  
So let us strive to live, and to our Spirits  
will be given  
Such wings as, when our Saviour calls,  
shall bear us up to heaven."

The Boy no answer made by words, but,  
so earnest was his look,  
Sleep fled, and with it fled the dream—re-  
corded in this book,  
Lest all that passed should melt away in  
silence from my mind,  
As visions still more bright have done, and  
left no trace behind.

But oh! that Country-man of thine, whose  
eye, loved Child, can see  
A pledge of endless bliss in acts of early  
piety,  
In verse, which to thy ear might come,  
would treat this simple theme,  
Nor leave untold our happy flight in that  
adventurous dream.

Alas the dream, to thee, poor Boy! to thee  
from whom it flowed,  
Was nothing, scarcely can be aught, yet  
'twas bounteously bestowed,

If I may dare to cherish hope that gentle  
eyes will read  
Not loth, and listening Little-ones, heart-  
touched, their fancies feed.<sup>1</sup>

1842.

### THE WIDOW ON WINDERMERE SIDE

The facts recorded in this Poem were given me, and the character of the person described, by my friend the Rev. R. P. Graves, who has long officiated as curate at Bowness, to the great benefit of the parish and neighbourhood. The individual was well known to him. She died before these verses were composed. It is scarcely worth while to notice that the stanzas are written in the sonnet form, which was adopted when I thought the matter might be included in twenty-eight lines.

## I

How beautiful when up a lofty height  
Honour ascends among the humblest poor,  
And feeling sinks as deep! See there the  
door  
Of One, a Widow, left beneath a weight  
Of blameless debt. On evil Fortune's  
spite  
She wasted no complaint, but strove to  
make  
A just repayment, both for conscience-sake  
And that herself and hers should stand  
upright  
In the world's eye. Her work when day-  
light failed  
Paused not, and through the depth of night  
she kept  
Such earnest vigils, that belief prevailed  
With some, the noble Creature never slept;  
But, one by one, the hand of death assailed  
Her children from her inmost heart be-  
wept.

## II

The Mother mourned, nor ceased her tears  
to flow,  
Till a winter's noonday placed her buried  
Son  
Before her eyes, last child of many gone—  
His raiment of angelic white, and lo!  
His very feet bright as the dazzling snow

<sup>1</sup> See Note.

Which they are touching; yea far brighter,  
even  
As that which comes, or seems to come,  
from heaven,  
Surpasses aught these elements can show.  
Much she rejoiced, trusting that from that  
hour  
Whate'er befell she could not grieve or pine;  
But the Transfigured, in and out of season,  
Appeared, and spiritual presence gained a  
power  
Over material forms that mastered reason.  
Oh, gracious Heaven, in pity make her  
thine!

## III

But why that prayer? as if to her could  
come  
No good but by the way that leads to bliss  
Through Death,—so judging we should  
judge amiss.  
Since reason failed want is her threatened  
doom,  
Yet frequent transports mitigate the gloom:  
Nor of those maniacs is she one that kiss  
The air or laugh upon a precipice;  
No, passing through strange sufferings to-  
ward the tomb  
She smiles as if a martyr's crown were  
won:  
Oft, when light breaks through clouds or  
waving trees,  
With outspread arms and fallen upon her  
knees  
The Mother hails in her descending Son  
An Angel, and in earthly ecstasies  
Her own angelic glory seems begun.

1842.

## FAREWELL LINES

These lines were designed as a farewell to Charles Lamb and his sister, who had retired from the throngs of London to comparative solitude in the village of Enfield.

"HIGH bliss is only for a higher state,"  
But, surely, if severe afflictions borne  
With patience merit the reward of peace,  
Peace ye deserve; and may the solid good,  
Sought by a wise though late exchange, and  
here  
With bounteous hand beneath a cottage-  
roof

To you accorded, never be withdrawn,  
 Nor for the world's best promises renounced.  
 Most soothing was it for a welcome Friend,  
 Fresh from the crowded city, to behold  
 That lonely union, privacy so deep,  
 Such calm employments, such entire content.  
 So when the rain is over, the storm laid,  
 A pair of herons oft-times have I seen,  
 Upon a rocky islet, side by side,  
 Drying their feathers in the sun, at ease;  
 And so, when night with grateful gloom  
 had fallen,  
 Two glow-worms in such nearness that they  
 shared,  
 As seemed, their soft self-satisfying light,  
 Each with the other, on the dewy ground,  
 Where He that made them blesses their  
 repose.—  
 When wandering among lakes and hills I  
 note,  
 Once more, those creatures thus by nature  
 paired,  
 And guarded in their tranquil state of life,  
 Even, as your happy presence to my mind  
 Their union brought, will they repay the  
 debt,  
 And send a thankful spirit back to you,  
 With hope that we, dear Friends! shall  
 meet again. 1842.

## AIREY-FORCE VALLEY

———Not a breath of air  
 Ruffles the bosom of this leafy glen.  
 From the brook's margin, wide around, the  
 trees  
 Are steadfast as the rocks; the brook itself,  
 Old as the hills that feed it from afar,  
 Doth rather deepen than disturb the calm  
 Where all things else are still and motionless.  
 And yet, even now, a little breeze, perchance  
 Escaped from boisterous winds that rage  
 without,  
 Has entered, by the sturdy oaks unfelt,  
 But to its gentle touch how sensitive  
 Is the light ash! that, pendent from the  
 brow  
 Of yon dim cave, in seeming silence makes  
 A soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs,  
 Powerful almost as vocal harmony  
 To stay the wanderer's steps and soothe his  
 thoughts. 1842.

“LYRE! THOUGH SUCH POWER  
DO IN THY MAGIC LIVE”

LYRE! though such power do in thy magic  
 live  
 As might from India's farthest plain  
 Recall the not unwilling Maid,  
 Assist me to detain  
 The lovely Fugitive:  
 Check with thy notes the impulse which,  
 betrayed  
 By her sweet farewell looks, I longed to  
 aid.  
 Here let me gaze enrapt upon that eye,  
 The impregnable and awe-inspiring fort  
 Of contemplation, the calm port  
 By reason fenced from winds that sigh  
 Among the restless sails of vanity.  
 But if no wish be hers that we should  
 part,  
 A humbler bliss would satisfy my heart.  
 Where all things are so fair,  
 Enough by her dear side to breathe the air  
 Of this Elysian weather;  
 And, on or in, or near, the brook, espy  
 Shade upon the sunshine lying  
 Faint and somewhat pensively;  
 And downward Image gaily vying  
 With its upright living tree  
 'Mid silver clouds, and openings of blue  
 sky  
 As soft almost and deep as her cerulean eye.

Nor less the joy with many a glance  
 Cast up the Stream or down at her be-  
 seeing,  
 To mark its eddying foam-balls prettily  
 distress  
 By ever-changing shape and want of rest;  
 Or watch, with mutual teaching,  
 The current as it plays  
 In flashing leaps and stealthy  
 creeps  
 Adown a rocky maze;  
 Or note (translucent summer's happiest  
 chance!)  
 In the slope-channel floored with pebbles  
 bright,  
 Stones of all hues, gem emulous of gem,  
 So vivid that they take from keenest sight  
 The liquid veil that seeks not to hide them.  
 1842.

## TO THE CLOUDS

These verses were suggested while I was walking on the foot-road between Rydal Mount and Grasmere. The clouds were driving over the top of Nab-Scar across the vale : they set my thoughts agoing, and the rest followed almost immediately.

ARMY of Clouds ! ye winged Hosts in troops

Ascending from behind the motionless brow  
Of that tall rock, as from a hidden world,  
Oh whither with such eagerness of speed ?  
What seek ye, or what shun ye ? of the gale

Companions, fear ye to be left behind,  
Or racing o'er your blue ethereal field  
Contend ye with each other ? of the sea  
Children, thus post ye over vale and height  
To sink upon your's mother's slap—and rest ?  
Or were ye rightlier hailed, when first mine eyes

Beheld in your impetuous march the likeness

Of a wide army pressing on to meet  
Or overtake some unknown enemy ?—  
But your smooth motions suit a peaceful aim ;

And Fancy, not less aptly pleased, compares  
Your squadrons to an endless flight of birds  
Aerial, upon due migration bound  
To milder climes ; or rather do ye urge  
In caravan your hasty pilgrimage  
To pause at last on more aspiring heights  
Than these, and utter your devotion there  
With thunderous voice ? Or are ye jubilant,  
And would ye, tracking your proud lord the Sun,

Be present at his setting ; or the pomp  
Of Persian mornings would ye fill, and stand

Poising your splendours high above the heads  
Of worshippers kneeling to their up-risen God ?

Whence, whence, ye Clouds ! this eagerness of speed ?

Speak, silent creatures.—They are gone, are fled,

Buried together in yon gloomy mass  
That loads the middle heaven ; and clear and bright

And vacant doth the region which they throughed

Appear ; a calm descent of sky conducting  
Down to the unapproachable abyss,  
Down to that hidden gulf from which they rose

To vanish—fleet as days and months and years,

Fleet as the generations of mankind,  
Power, glory, empire, as the world itself,  
The lingering world, when time hath ceased to be.

But the winds roar, shaking the rooted trees,

And see ! a bright precursor to a train  
Perchance as numerous, overpeers the rock  
That sullenly refuses to partake  
Of the wild impulse. From a fount of life  
Invisible, the long procession moves  
Luminous or gloomy, welcome to the vale  
Which they are entering, welcome to mine eye

That sees them, to my soul that owns in them,

And in the bosom of the firmament  
O'er which they move, wherein they are contained,

A type of her capacious self and all  
Her restless progeny.

A humble walk  
Here is my body doomed to tread, this path,

A little hoary line and faintly traced,  
Work, shall we call it, of the shepherd's foot

Or of his flock ?—joint vestige of them both.

I pace it unrepining, for my thoughts  
Admit no bondage and my words have wings.

Where is the Orphean lyre, or Druid harp,  
To accompany the verse ? The mountain blast

Shall be our *hand* of music ; he shall sweep  
The rocks, and quivering trees, and billowy lake,

And search the fibres of the caves, and they  
Shall answer, for our song is of the Clouds  
And the wind loves them ; and the gentle gales—

Which by their aid re-clothe the naked lawn

With annual verdure, and revive the woods,  
And moisten the parched lips of thirsty flowers—

Love them ; and every idle breeze of air

Bends to the favourite burthen. Moon and stars  
 Keep their most solemn vigils when the Clouds  
 Watch also, shifting peaceably their place  
 Like bands of ministering Spirits, or when they lie,  
 As if some Protean art the change had wrought,  
 In listless quiet o'er the ethereal deep  
 Scattered, a Cyclades of various shapes  
 And all degrees of beauty. O ye Lightnings!  
 Ye are their perilous offspring; and the Sun—  
 Source inexhaustible of life and joy,  
 And type of man's far-darting reason, therefore  
 In old time worshipped as the god of verse,  
 A blazing intellectual deity—  
 Loves his own glory in their looks, and showers  
 Upon that unsubstantial brotherhood  
 Visions with all but beatific light  
 Enriched—too transient were they not renewed  
 From age to age, and did not, while we gaze  
 In silent rapture, credulous desire  
 Nourish the hope that memory lacks not power  
 To keep the treasure unimpaired. Vain thought!  
 Yet why repine, created as we are  
 For joy and rest, albeit to find them only  
 Lodged in the bosom of eternal things?  
 1842.

“WANSFELL!<sup>1</sup> THIS HOUSEHOLD  
 HAS A FAVOURED LOT”

WANSFELL! this Household has a favoured lot,  
 Living with liberty on thee to gaze,  
 To watch while Morn first crowns thee with her rays,  
 Or when along thy breast serenely float  
 Evening's angelic clouds. Yet ne'er a note  
 Hath sounded (shame upon the Bard!) thy praise

<sup>1</sup> The hill that rises to the south-east, above Ambleside.

For all that thou, as if from heaven, hast brought  
 Of glory lavished on our quiet days.  
 Bountiful Son of Earth! when we are gone  
 From every object dear to mortal sight,  
 As soon we shall be, may these words attest  
 How oft, to elevate our spirits, shone  
 Thy visionary majesties of light,  
 How in thy pensive glooms our hearts found rest.  
 Dec. 24, 1842.

THE EAGLE AND THE DOVE

SHADE of Caractacus, if spirits love  
 The cause they fought for in their earthly home  
 To see the Eagle ruffled by the Dove  
 May soothe thy memory of the chains of Rome.  
 These children claim thee for their sire; the breath  
 Of thy renown, from Cambrian mountains, fans  
 A flame within them that despises death  
 And glorifies the truant youth of Vannes.  
 With thy own scorn of tyrants they advance,  
 But truth divine has sanctified their rage,  
 A silver cross encased with flowers of France  
 Their badge, attests the holy fight they wage.

The shrill defiance of the young crusade  
 Their veteran foes mock as an idle noise;  
 But unto Faith and Loyalty comes aid  
 From Heaven, gigantic force to beardless boys.  
 1842.

GRACE DARLING

AMONG the dwellers in the silent fields  
 The natural heart is touched, and public way  
 And crowded street resound with ballad strains,  
 Inspired by ONE whose very name bespeaks  
 Favour divine, exalting human love;  
 Whom, since her birth on bleak Northumbria's coast,

Known unto few but prized as far as known,  
 A single Act endears to high and low  
 Through the whole land—to Manhood,  
     moved in spite  
 Of the world's freezing cares—to generous  
 Youth—  
 To Infancy, that lisps her praise—to Age  
 Whose eye reflects it, glistening through a  
     tear  
 Of tremulous admiration. Such true fame  
 Awaits her *now*; but, verily, good deeds  
 Do not imperishable record find  
 Save in the rolls of heaven, where hers may  
     live  
 A theme for angels, when they celebrate  
 The high-souled virtues which forgetful  
     earth  
 Has witnessed. Oh! that winds and waves  
     could speak  
 Of things which their united power called  
     forth—  
 From the pure depths of her humanity!  
 A Maiden gentle, yet, at duty's call,  
 Firm and unflinching, as the Lighthouse  
     reared  
 On the Island-rock, her lonely dwelling-  
     place;  
 Or like the invincible Rock itself that  
     braves,  
 Age after age, the hostile elements,  
 As when it guarded holy Cuthbert's cell.  
     All night the storm had raged, nor  
     ceased, nor paused,  
 When, as day broke, the Maid, through  
     misty air,  
 Espies far off a Wreck, amid the surf,  
 Beating on one of those disastrous isles—  
 Half of a Vessel, half—no more; the rest  
 Had vanished, swallowed up with all that  
     there  
 Had for the common safety striven in vain,  
 Or thither thronged for refuge. With quick  
     glance  
 Daughter and Sire through optic-glass  
     discern,  
 Clinging about the remnant of this Ship,  
 Creatures—how precious in the Maiden's  
     sight!  
 For whom, belike, the old Man grieves  
     still more  
 Than for their fellow-sufferers engulfed  
 Where every parting agony is hushed,  
 And hope and fear mix not in further strife.

"But courage, Father! let us out to sea—  
 A few may yet be saved." The Daughter's  
     words,  
 Her earnest tone, and look beaming with  
     faith,  
 Dispel the Father's doubts: nor do they  
     lack  
 The noble-minded Mother's helping hand  
 To launch the boat; and with her blessing  
     cheered,  
 And inwardly sustained by silent prayer,  
 Together they put forth, Father and Child!  
 Each grasps an oar, and struggling on  
     they go—  
 Rivals in effort; and, alike intent  
 Here to elude and there surmount, they  
     watch  
 The billows lengthening, mutually crossed  
 And shattered, and re-gathering their  
     might;  
 As if the tumult, by the Almighty's will  
 Were, in the conscious sea, roused and  
     prolonged  
 That woman's fortitude—so tried, so  
     proved—  
 May brighten more and more!  
     True to the mark,  
 They stem the current of that perilous  
     gorge,  
 Their arms still strengthening with the  
     strengthening heart,  
 Though danger, as the Wreck is neared,  
     becomes  
 More imminent. Not unseen do they  
     approach;  
 And rapture, with varieties of fear  
 Incessantly conflicting, thrills the frames  
 Of those who, in that dauntless energy,  
 Foretaste deliverance; but the least per-  
     turbed  
 Can scarcely trust his eyes, when he per-  
     ceives  
 That of the pair—tossed on the waves to  
     bring  
 Hope to the hopeless, to the dying, life—  
 One is a Woman, a poor earthly sister,  
 Or, be the Visitant other than she seems,  
 A guardian Spirit sent from pitying Heaven,  
 In woman's shape. But why prolong the  
     tale,  
 Casting weak words amid a host of  
     thoughts  
 Armed to repel them? Every hazard faced  
 And difficulty mastered, with resolve

That no one breathing should be left to perish,

This last remainder of the crew are all  
Placed in the little boat, then o'er the deep  
Are safely borne, landed upon the beach,  
And, in fulfilment of God's mercy, lodged  
Within the sheltering Lighthouse.—Shout,  
ye Waves

Send forth a song of triumph. Waves and  
Winds,  
Exult in this deliverance wrought through  
faith

In Him whose Providence your rage hath  
served !

Ye screaming Sea-mews, in the concert  
join !

And would that some immortal Voice—a  
Voice

Fitly attuned to all that gratitude  
Breathes out from floor or couch, through  
pallid lips

Of the survivors—to the clouds might  
bear—

Blended with praise of that parental love,  
Beneath whose watchful eye the Maiden  
grew

Pious and pure, modest and yet so brave,  
Though young so wise, though meek so  
resolute—

Might carry to the clouds and to the stars,  
Yea, to celestial Choirs, GRACE DARLING'S  
name !

1843.

“WHILE BEAMS OF ORIENT  
LIGHT SHOOT WIDE AND  
HIGH”

WHILE beams of orient light shoot wide  
and high,

Deep in the vale a little rural Town<sup>1</sup>  
Breathes forth a cloud-like creature of its  
own,

That mounts not toward the radiant  
morning sky,

But, with a less ambitious sympathy,  
Hangs o'er its Parent waking to the cares  
Troubles and toils that every day prepares.  
So Fancy, to the musing Poet's eye,  
Endears that Lingerer. And how blest her  
sway

(Like influence never may my soul reject)

<sup>1</sup> Ambleside.

If the calm Heaven, now to its zenith decked  
With glorious forms in numberless array,  
To the lone shepherd on the hills disclose  
Gleams from a world in which the saints  
repose.

Jan. 1, 1843.

TO THE REV. CHRISTOPHER  
WORDSWORTH, D.D., MASTER  
OF HARROW SCHOOL

After the perusal of his *Theophilus Anglicanus*,  
recently published.

ENLIGHTENED Teacher, gladly from thy  
hand

Have I received this proof of pains bestowed  
By Thee to guide thy Pupils on the road  
That, in our native isle, and every land,  
The Church, when trusting in divine com-  
mand

And in her Catholic attributes, hath trod :  
O may these lessons be with profit scanned  
To thy heart's wish, thy labour blest by  
God !

So the bright faces of the young and gay  
Shall look more bright—the happy, happier  
still ;

Catch, in the pauses of their keenest play,  
Motions of thought which elevate the will  
And, like the Spire that from your classic  
Hill

Points heavenward, indicate the end and  
way.

RYDAL MOUNT, Dec. 11, 1843.

#### INSCRIPTION

FOR A MONUMENT IN CROSTHWAITTE  
CHURCH, IN THE VALE OF KESWICK

YE vales and hills whose beauty hither drew  
The poet's steps, and fixed him here, on you  
His eyes have closed ! And ye, loved books,  
no more

Shall Southey feed upon your precious lore,  
To works that ne'er shall forfeit their re-  
nown,

Adding immortal labours of his own—  
Whether he traced historic truth, with zeal  
For the State's guidance, or the Church's  
weal,

Or Fancy, disciplined by studious art,  
Informed his pen, or wisdom of the heart,  
Or judgments sanctioned in the Patriot's  
mind

By reverence for the rights of all mankind.  
Wide were his aims, yet in no human breast  
Could private feelings meet for holier rest.  
His joys, his griefs, have vanished like a  
cloud

From Skiddaw's top; but he to heaven was  
vowed

Through his industrious life, and Christian  
faith

Calmed in his soul the fear of change and  
death. 1843.

#### ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL AND WINDERMERE RAILWAY

Is then no nook of English ground secure  
From rash assault?<sup>1</sup> Schemes of retire-  
ment sown

In youth, and 'mid the busy world kept pure  
As when their earliest flowers of hope were  
blown,

Must perish;—how can they this blight en-  
dure?

And must he too the ruthless change bemoan  
Who scorns a false utilitarian lure

'Mid his paternal fields at random thrown?  
Baffle the threat, bright Scene, from Orrest-  
head

Given to the pausing traveller's rapturous  
glance:

Plead for thy peace, thou beautiful romance  
Of nature; and, if human hearts be dead,  
Speak, passing winds; ye torrents, with  
your strong

And constant voice, protest against the  
wrong.

October 12, 1844.

<sup>1</sup> The degree and kind of attachment which many of the yeomanry feel to their small inheritances can scarcely be over-rated. Near the house of one of them stands a magnificent tree, which a neighbour of the owner advised him to fell for profit's sake. "Fell it!" exclaimed the yeoman, "I had rather fall on my knees and worship it." It happens, I believe, that the intended railway would pass through this little property, and I hope that an apology for the answer will not be thought necessary by one who enters into the strength of the feeling.

#### "PROUD WERE YE, MOUNTAINS, WHEN, IN TIMES OF OLD"

PROUD were ye, Mountains, when, in times  
of old,

Your patriot sons, to stem invasive war,  
Intrenched your brows; ye gloried in each  
scar:

Now, for your shame, a Power, the Thirst  
of Gold,

That rules o'er Britain like a baneful star,  
Wills that your peace, your beauty, shall  
be sold,

And clear way made for her triumphal car  
Through the beloved retreats your arms  
enfold!

Heard YE that Whistle? As her long-linked  
Train

Swept onwards, did the vision cross your  
view?

Yes, ye were startled;—and, in balance true,  
Weighing the mischief with the promised  
gain,

Mountains, and Vales, and Floods, I call  
on you

To share the passion of a just disdain.

1844.

#### AT FURNESS ABBEY

HERE, where, of havoc tired and rash un-  
doing,

Man left this Structure to become Time's  
prey

A soothing spirit follows in the way  
That Nature takes, her counter-work pur-  
suing.

See how her Ivy clasps the sacred Ruin  
Fall to prevent or beautify decay;

And, on the mouldered walls, how bright,  
how gay,

The flowers in pearly dew's their bloom  
renewing!

Thanks to the place, blessings upon the  
hour;

Even as I speak the rising Sun's first smile  
Gleams on the grass-crowned top of yon  
tall Tower

Whose cawing occupants with joy proclaim  
Prescriptive title to the shattered pile

Where, Cavendish, *thine* seems nothing  
but a name!

1844.



"FORTH FROM A JUTTING RIDGE,  
AROUND WHOSE BASE"

FORTH from a jutting ridge, around whose  
base

Winds our deep Vale, two heath-clad Rocks  
ascend

In fellowship, the loftiest of the pair  
Rising to no ambitious height ; yet both,  
O'er lake and stream, mountain and flowery  
mead,

Unfolding prospects fair as human eyes  
Ever beheld. Up-led with mutual help,  
To one or other brow of those twin Peaks  
Were two adventurous Sisters wont to climb,  
And took no note of the hour while thence  
they gazed,

The blooming heath their couch, gazed, side  
by side,

In speechless admiration. I, a witness  
And frequent sharer of their calm delight  
With thankful heart, to either Eminence  
Gave the baptismal name each Sister bore.  
Now are they parted, far as Death's cold hand  
Hath power to part the Spirits of those who  
love

As they did love. Ye kindred Pinnacles—  
That, while the generations of mankind  
Follow each other to their hiding-place  
In time's abyss, are privileged to endure  
Beautiful in yourselves, and richly graced  
With like command of beauty—grant your  
aid

For MARY's humble, SARAH's silent claim,  
That their pure joy in nature may survive  
From age to age in blended memory.

1845.

THE WESTMORELAND GIRL

TO MY GRANDCHILDREN

PART I

SEEK who will delight in fable  
I shall tell you truth. A Lamb  
Leapt from this steep bank to follow  
'Cross the brook its thoughtless dam.

Far and wide on hill and valley  
Rain had fallen, unceasing rain,  
And the bleating mother's Young-one  
Struggled with the flood in vain :

But, as chanced, a Cottage-maiden  
(Ten years scarcely had she told)  
Seeing, plunged into the torrent,  
Clasped the Lamb and kept her hold.

Whirled adown the rocky channel,  
Sinking, rising, on they go,  
Peace and rest, as seems, before them  
Only in the lake below.

Oh ! it was a frightful current  
Whose fierce wrath the Girl had braved ;  
Clap your hands with joy my Hearers,  
Shout in triumph, both are saved ;

Saved by courage that with danger  
Grew, by strength the gift of love,  
And belike a guardian angel  
Came with succour from above.

PART II

Now, to a maturer Audience,  
Let me speak of this brave Child  
Left among her native mountains  
With wild Nature to run wild.

So, unwatched by love maternal,  
Mother's care no more her guide,  
Fared this little bright-eyed Orphan  
Even while at her father's side.

Spare your blame,—remembrance makes  
him

Loth to rule by strict command ;  
Still upon his cheek are living  
Touches of her infant hand,

Dear caresses given in pity,  
Sympathy that soothed his grief,  
As the dying mother witnessed  
To her thankful mind's relief.

Time passed on ; the Child was happy,  
Like a Spirit of air she moved,  
Wayward, yet by all who knew her  
For her tender heart beloved.

Scarcely less than sacred passions,  
Bred in house, in grove, and field,  
Link her with the inferior creatures,  
Urge her powers their rights to shield.

Anglers, bent on reckless pastime,  
Learn how she can feel alike  
Both for tiny harmless minnow  
And the fierce and sharp-toothed pike.

Merciful protectress, kindling  
Into anger or disdain;  
Many a captive hath she rescued,  
Others saved from lingering pain.

Listen yet awhile;—with patience  
Hear the homely truths I tell,  
She in Grasmere's old church-steeple  
Tolled this day the passing-bell.

Yes, the wild Girl of the mountains  
To their echoes gave the sound,  
Notice punctual as the minute,  
Warning solemn and profound.

She, fulfilling her sire's office,  
Rang alone the far-heard knell,  
Tribute, by her hand, in sorrow,  
Paid to One who loved her well.

When his spirit was departed  
On that service she went forth;  
Nor will fail the like to render  
When his corse is laid in earth.

What then wants the Child to temper,  
In her breast, unruly fire,  
To control the froward impulse  
And restrain the vague desire?

Easily a pious training  
And a stedfast outward power  
Would supplant the weeds and cherish,  
In their stead, each opening flower.

Thus the fearless Lamb-deliv'rer,  
Woman-grown, meek-hearted, sage,  
May become a blest example  
For her sex, of every age.

Watchful as a wheeling eagle,  
Constant as a soaring lark,  
Should the country need a heroine,  
She might prove our Maid of Arc.

Leave that thought; and here be uttered  
Prayer that Grace divine may raise  
Her humane courageous spirit  
Up to heaven, thro' peaceful ways.

*June 6, 1845.*

## AT FURNESS ABBEY

WELL have yon Railway Labourers to THIS  
ground

Withdrawn for noontide rest. They sit,  
they walk

Among the Ruins, but no idle talk  
Is heard; to grave demeanour all are bound;  
And from one voice a Hymn with tuneful  
sound

Hallows once more the long-deserted Quire  
And thrills the old sepulchral earth, around.  
Others look up, and with fixed eyes admire  
That wide-spanned arch, wondering how it  
was raised,

To keep, so high in air, its strength and  
grace:

All seem to feel the spirit of the place,  
And by the general reverence God is  
praised:

Profane Despoilers, stand ye not reprov'd,  
While thus these simple-hearted men are  
moved? *June 21, 1845.*

“YES! THOU ART FAIR, YET BE  
NOT MOVED”

Yes! thou art fair, yet be not moved  
To scorn the declaration,  
That sometimes I in thee have loved  
My fancy's own creation.

Imagination needs must stir;  
Dear Maid, this truth believe,  
Minds that have nothing to confer  
Find little to perceive.

Be pleased that nature made thee fit  
To feed my heart's devotion,  
By laws to which all Forms submit  
In sky, air, earth, and ocean.

*1845.*

“WHAT HEAVENLY SMILES! O  
LADY MINE”

WHAT heavenly smiles! O Lady mine  
Through my very heart they shine;  
And, if my brow gives back their light,  
Do thou look gladly on the sight;  
As the clear Moon with modest pride  
Beholds her own bright beams  
Reflected from the mountain's side  
And from the headlong streams.

*1845.*

## TO A LADY

IN ANSWER TO A REQUEST THAT I WOULD  
WRITE HER A POEM UPON SOME DRAW-  
INGS THAT SHE HAD MADE OF FLOWERS  
IN THE ISLAND OF MADEIRA

FAIR Lady! can I sing of flowers  
That in Madeira bloom and fade,  
I who ne'er sate within their bowers,  
Nor through their sunny lawns have  
strayed?

How they in sprightly dance are worn  
By Shepherd-groom or May-day queen,  
Or holy festal pomps adorn,  
These eyes have never seen.

Yet tho' to me the pencil's art  
No like remembrances can give,  
Your portraits still may reach the heart  
And there for gentle pleasure live;  
While Fancy ranging with free scope  
Shall on some lovely Alien set  
A name with us endeared to hope,  
To peace, or fond regret.

Still as we look with nicer care,  
Some new resemblance we may trace:  
A *Heart's-ease* will perhaps be there,  
A *Speedwell* may not want its place.  
And so may we, with charmed mind  
Beholding what your skill has wrought,  
Another *Star-of-Bethlehem* find,  
A new *Forget-me-not*.

From earth to heaven with motion fleet  
From heaven to earth our thoughts will  
pass,  
A *Holy-thistle* here we meet  
And there a *Shepherd's weather-glass*;  
And haply some familiar name  
Shall grace the fairest, sweetest, plant  
Whose presence cheers the drooping frame  
Of English Emigrant.

Gazing she feels its powers beguile  
Sad thoughts, and breathes with easier  
breath;  
Alas! that meek that tender smile  
Is but a harbinger of death:  
And pointing with a feeble hand  
She says, in faint words by sighs broken,  
Bear for me to my native land  
This precious Flower, true love's last  
token. 1845.

"GLAD SIGHT WHEREVER NEW  
WITH OLD"

GLAD sight wherever new with old  
Is joined through some dear homeborn tie;  
The life of all that we behold  
Depends upon that mystery.  
Vain is the glory of the sky,  
The beauty vain of field and grove,  
Unless, while with admiring eye  
We gaze, we also learn to love. 1845.

## LOVE LIES BLEEDING

It has been said that the English, though their country has produced so many great poets, is now the most unpoetical nation in Europe. It is probably true; for they have more temptation to become so than any other European people. Trade, commerce, and manufactures, physical science, and mechanic arts, out of which so much wealth has arisen, have made our countrymen infinitely less sensible to movements of imagination and fancy than were our forefathers in their simple state of society. How touching and beautiful were, in most instances, the names they gave to our indigenous flowers, or any other they were familiarly acquainted with!—Every month for many years have we been importing plants and flowers from all quarters of the globe, many of which are spread through our gardens, and some perhaps likely to be met with on the few Commons which we have left. Will their botanical names ever be displaced by plain English appellations, which will bring them home to our hearts by connection with our joys and sorrows? It can never be, unless society treads back her steps towards those simplicities which have been banished by the undue influence of towns spreading and spreading in every direction, so that city-life with every generation takes more and more the lead of rural. Among the ancients, villages were reckoned the seats of barbarism. Refinement, for the most part false, increases the desire to accumulate wealth; and while theories of political economy are boastfully pleading for the practice, inhumanity pervades all our dealings in buying and selling. This selfishness wars against disinterested imagination in all directions, and evils coming round in a circle, barbarism spreads in every quarter of our island. Oh for the reign of justice, and then the humblest man among us would have more power and dignity in and about him than the highest have now!

You call it, "Love lies bleeding,"—so  
you may,

Though the red Flower, not prostrate,  
only droops,  
As we have seen it here from day to day,  
From month to month, life passing not  
away:

A flower how rich in sadness! Even thus  
stoops,  
(Sentient by Grecian sculpture's marvellous  
power)

Thus leans, with hanging brow and body  
bent

Earthward in uncomplaining languishment  
The dying Gladiator. So, sad Flower!  
(*'Tis Fancy guides me willing to be led,  
Though by a slender thread,*)  
So drooped Adonis bathed in sanguine  
dew

Of his death-wound, when he from innocent  
air

The gentlest breath of resignation drew;  
While Venus in a passion of despair  
Rent, weeping over him, her golden hair  
Spangled with drops of that celestial  
shower.

She suffered, as Immortals sometimes do;  
But pangs more lasting far, *that* Lover  
knew

Who first, weighed down by scorn, in  
some lone bower

Did press this semblance of unpitied smart  
Into the service of his constant heart,  
His own dejection, downcast Flower! could  
share

With thine, and gave the mournful name  
which thou wilt ever bear. 1845.

#### COMPANION TO THE FOREGOING

NEVER enlivened with the liveliest ray  
That fosters growth or checks or cheers  
decay,

Nor by the heaviest rain-drops more  
deprest,

This Flower, that first appeared as summer's  
guest,

Preserves her beauty 'mid autumnal leaves  
And to her mournful habits fondly cleaves.  
When files of stateliest plants have ceased  
to bloom,

One after one submitting to their doom,  
When her coevals each and all are fled,  
What keeps her thus reclined upon her  
lonesome bed?

The old mythologists, more impressed  
than we

Of this late day by character in tree  
Or herb, that claimed peculiar sympathy,  
Or by the silent lapse of fountain clear,  
Or with the language of the viewless air  
By bird or beast made vocal, sought a cause  
To solve the mystery, not in Nature's laws  
But in Man's fortunes. Hence—a thousand  
tales

Sung to the plaintive lyre in Grecian vales.  
Nor doubt that something of their spirit  
swayed

The fancy-stricken Youth or heart-sick Maid,  
Who, while each stood companionless and  
eyed

This undeparting Flower in crimson dyed,  
Thought of a wound which death is slow to  
cure,

A fate that has endured and will endure,  
And, patience coveting yet passion feeding,  
Called the dejected Lingerer, *Loves lies  
bleeding.* 1845.

#### THE CUCKOO-CLOCK

Of this clock I have nothing further to say than  
what the poem expresses, except that it must be  
here recorded that it was a present from the dear  
friend for whose sake these notes were chiefly  
undertaken, and who has written them from my  
dictation.

WOULDEST thou be taught, when sleep has  
taken flight,

By a sure voice that can most sweetly tell,  
How far off yet a glimpse of morning light,  
And if to lure the truant back be well,  
Forbear to covet a Repeater's stroke,  
That, answering to thy touch, will sound  
the hour;

Better provide thee with a Cuckoo-clock  
For service hung behind thy chamber-door;  
And in due time the soft spontaneous shock,  
The double note, as if with living power,  
Will to composure lead—or make thee  
blithe as bird in bower.

List, Cuckoo—Cuckoo!—oft tho' tempests  
howl,

Or nipping frost remind thee trees are bare,  
How cattle pine, and droop the shivering  
fowl,

Thy spirits will seem to feed on balmy air:

I speak with knowledge,—by that Voice  
 beguiled,  
 Thou wilt salute old memories as they  
 throng  
 Into thy heart; and fancies, running wild  
 Through fresh green fields, and budding  
 groves among,  
 Will make thee happy, happy as a child:  
 Of sunshine wilt thou think, and flowers,  
 and song,  
 And breathe as in a world where nothing  
 can go wrong.

And know—that, even for him who shuns  
 the day  
 And nightly tosses on a bed of pain;  
 Whose joys, from all but memory swept  
 away,  
 Must come unhop'd for, if they come again;  
 Know—that, for him whose waking  
 thoughts, severe  
 As his distress is sharp, would scorn my  
 theme,  
 The mimic notes, striking upon his ear  
 In sleep, and intermingling with his dream,  
 Could from sad regions send him to a dear  
 Delightful land of verdure, shower and  
 gleam,  
 To mock the *wandering* Voice beside some  
 haunted stream.

O bounty without measure! while the grace  
 Of Heaven doth in such wise, from humblest  
 springs,  
 Pour pleasure forth, and solaces that trace  
 A mazy course along familiar things,  
 Well may our hearts have faith that  
 blessings come,  
 Streaming from founts above the starry sky,  
 With angels when their own untroubled  
 home  
 They leave, and speed on nightly embassy  
 To visit earthly chambers,—and for whom?  
 Yea, both for souls who God's forbearance  
 try,  
 And those that seek his help, and for his  
 mercy sigh. 1845.

#### "SO FAIR, SO SWEET, WITHAL SO SENSITIVE"

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,  
 Would that the little Flowers were born to  
 live,

Conscious of half the pleasure which they  
 give;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were  
 known  
 The beauty of its star-shaped shadow,  
 thrown  
 On the smooth surface of this naked stone!

And what if hence a bold desire should mount  
 High as the Sun, that he could take account  
 Of all that issues from his glorious fount!

So might he ken how by his sovereign aid  
 These delicate companionships are made;  
 And how he rules the pomp of light and  
 shade;

And were the Sister-power that shines by  
 night  
 So privileged, what a countenance of delight  
 Would through the clouds break forth on  
 human sight!

Fond fancies! wheresoe'er shall turn thine  
 eye

On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,  
 Converse with Nature in pure sympathy;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes quelled,  
 Be Thou to love and praise alike impelled,  
 Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

1845.

#### TO THE PENNSYLVANIANS

DAYS undefiled by luxury or sloth,  
 Firm self-denial, manners grave and staid,  
 Rights equal, laws with cheerfulness obeyed,  
 Words that require no sanction from an  
 oath,

And simple honesty a common growth—  
 This high repute, with bounteous Nature's  
 aid,

Won confidence, now ruthlessly betrayed  
 At will, your power the measure of your  
 troth!—

All who revere the memory of Penn  
 Grieve for the land on whose wild woods  
 his name

Was fondly grafted with a virtuous aim,  
 Renounced, abandoned by degenerate Men  
 For state-dishonour black as ever came  
 To upper air from Mammon's loathsome  
 den. 1845.

"YOUNG ENGLAND—WHAT IS  
THEN BECOME OF OLD"

YOUNG ENGLAND—what is then become of  
Old

Of dear Old England? Think they she is  
dead,

Dead to the very name? Presumption fed  
On empty air! That name will keep its  
hold

In the true filial bosom's inmost fold  
For ever.—The Spirit of Alfred, at the head  
Of all who for her rights watched, toiled  
and bled,

Knows that this prophecy is not too bold.  
What—how! shall she submit in will and  
deed

To Beardless Boys—an imitative race,  
The *seruum pecus* of a Gallic breed?  
Dear Mother! if thou *must* thy steps re-  
trace,

Go where at least meek Innocency dwells;  
Let Babes and Sucklings be thy oracles,  
1845.

"THOUGH THE BOLD WINGS OF  
POESY AFFECT"

THOUGH the bold wings of Poesy affect  
The clouds, and wheel around the mountain  
tops

Rejoicing, from her loftiest height she drops  
Well pleased to skim the plain with wild  
flowers deckt

Or muse in solemn grove whose shades  
protect

The lingering dew—there steals along, or  
stops

Watching the least small bird that round  
her hops,

Or creeping worm, with sensitive respect.  
Her functions are they therefore less divine,  
Her thoughts less deep, or void of grave  
intent

Her simplest fancies? Should that fear be  
thine,

Aspiring Votary, ere thy hand present  
One offering, kneel before her modest  
shrine,

With brow in penitential sorrow bent!  
1845.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF  
THE BIRD OF PARADISE

This subject has been treated of in another  
note. I will here only by way of comment direct  
attention to the fact that pictures of animals and  
other productions of nature as seen in conserva-  
tories, menageries, museums, etc., would do little  
for the national mind, nay they would be rather  
injurious to it, if the imagination were excluded  
by the presence of the object, more or less out of  
a state of nature. If it were not that we learn to  
talk and think of the lion and the eagle, the pal-  
mtree and even the cedar, from the impassioned  
introduction of them so frequently into Holy  
Scripture and by great poets, and divines who  
write as poets, the spiritual part of our nature,  
and therefore the higher part of it, would derive  
no benefit from such intercourse with such objects.

THE gentlest Poet, with free thoughts en-  
dowed,

And a true master of the glowing strain,  
Might scan the narrow province with disdain  
That to the Painter's skill is here allowed.

This, this the Bird of Paradise! disclaim  
The daring thought, forget the name;  
This the Sun's Bird, whom Glendoveers  
might own

As no unworthy Partner in their flight  
Through seas of ether, where the ruffling  
sway

Of nether air's rude billows is unknown;  
Whom Sylphs, if e'er for casual pastime  
they

Through India's spicy regions wing their  
way,

Might bow to as their Lord. What  
character,

O sovereign Nature! I appeal to thee,  
Of all thy feathered progeny  
Is so unearthly, and what shape so fair?  
So richly decked in variegated down,  
Green, sable, shining yellow, shadowy  
brown,

Tints softly with each other blended,  
Hues doubtfully begun and ended;  
Or intershooting, and to sight  
Lost and recovered, as the rays of light  
Glance on the conscious plumes touched  
here and there?

Full surely, when with such proud gifts of  
life

Began the pencil's strife,  
O'erweening Art was caught as in a snare.

A sense of seemingly presumptuous  
 wrong  
 Gave the first impulse to the Poet's song;  
 But, of his scorn repenting soon, he drew  
 A juster judgment from a calmer view;  
 And, with a spirit freed from discontent,  
 Thankfully took an effort that was meant  
 Not with God's bounty, Nature's love to  
 vie,  
 Or made with hope to please that inward  
 eye  
 Which ever strives in vain itself to satisfy,  
 But to recall the truth by some faint trace  
 Of power ethereal and celestial grace,  
 That in the living Creature find on earth a  
 place. 1845.

## SONNET

WHY should we weep or mourn, Angelic  
 boy,  
 For such thou wert ere from our sight  
 removed,  
 Holy, and ever dutiful—beloved  
 From day to day with never-ceasing joy,  
 And hopes as dear as could the heart em-  
 ploy  
 In aught to earth pertaining? Death has  
 proved  
 His might, nor less his mercy, as behoved—  
 Death conscious that he only could destroy  
 The bodily frame. That beauty is laid low  
 To moulder in a far-off field of Rome;  
 But Heaven is now, blest Child, thy Spirit's  
 home:  
 When such divine communion, which we  
 know,  
 Is felt, thy Roman-burial place will be  
 Surely a sweet remembrancer of Thee. 1846.

"WHERE LIES THE TRUTH? HAS  
 MAN, IN WISDOM'S CREED"

WHERE lies the truth? has Man, in wisdom's  
 creed,  
 A pitiable doom; for respite brief  
 A care more anxious, or a heavier grief?  
 Is he ungrateful, and doth little heed  
 God's bounty, soon forgotten; or indeed,  
 Must Man, with labour born, awake to  
 sorrow

When Flowers rejoice and Larks with rival  
 speed  
 Spring from their nests to bid the Sun good  
 morrow?  
 They mount for rapture as their songs pro-  
 claim  
 Warbled in hearing both of earth and sky;  
 But o'er the contrast wherefore heave a  
 sigh?  
 Like those aspirants let us soar—our aim,  
 Through life's worst trials, whether shocks  
 or snares,  
 A happier, brighter, purer Heaven than  
 theirs. 1846.

"I KNOW AN AGED MAN CON-  
 STRAINED TO DWELL"

I KNOW an aged Man constrained to dwell  
 In a large house of public charity,  
 Where he abides, as in a Prisoner's cell,  
 With numbers near, alas! no company.  
 When he could creep about, at will, though  
 poor  
 And forced to live on alms, this old Man fed  
 A Redbreast, one that to his cottage door  
 Came not, but in a lane partook his bread.  
 There, at the root of one particular tree,  
 An easy seat this worn-out Labourer found  
 While Robin pecked the crumbs upon his  
 knee  
 Laid one by one, or scattered on the ground.  
 Dear intercourse was theirs, day after day;  
 What signs of mutual gladness when they  
 met!  
 Think of their common peace, their simple  
 play,  
 The parting moment and its fond regret.  
 Months passed in love that failed not to  
 fulfil,  
 In spite of season's change, its own demand,  
 By fluttering pinions here and busy bill;  
 There by caresses from a tremulous hand.  
 Thus in the chosen spot a tie so strong  
 Was formed between the solitary pair,  
 That when his fate had housed him 'mid a  
 throng  
 The Captive shunned all converse proffered  
 there.

Wife, children, kindred, they were dead and gone;

But, if no evil hap his wishes crossed,  
One living Stay was left, and on that one  
Some recompence for all that he had lost.

Oh that the good old Man had power to prove,

By message sent through air or visible token,  
That still he loves the Bird, and still must love;

That friendship lasts though fellowship is broken!  
1846.

### "HOW BEAUTIFUL THE QUEEN OF NIGHT"

How beautiful the Queen of Night, on high  
Her way pursuing among scattered clouds,  
Where, ever and anon, her head she shrouds  
Hidden from view in dense obscurity.  
But look, and to the watchful eye  
A brightening edge will indicate that soon  
We shall behold the struggling Moon  
Break forth,—again to walk the clear blue  
sky.  
1846.

### EVENING VOLUNTARIES

TO LUCCA GIORDANO

GIORDANO, verily thy Pencil's skill  
Hath here portrayed with Nature's happiest  
grace

The fair Endymion couched on Latmos-hill;  
And Dian gazing on the Shepherd's face  
In rapture,—yet suspending her embrace,  
As not unconscious with what power the  
thrill

Of her most timid touch his sleep would  
chase,

And, with his sleep, that beauty calm and  
still.

Oh may this work have found its last retreat  
Here in a Mountain-bard's secure abode,  
One to whom, yet a School-boy, Cynthia  
showed

A face of love which he in love would greet,  
Fixed, by her smile, upon some rocky seat;  
Or lured along where greenwood paths he  
trod.

RYDAL MOUNT, 1846.

### "WHO BUT IS PLEASED TO WATCH THE MOON ON HIGH"

WHO but is pleased to watch the moon on  
high

Travelling where she from time to time en-  
shrouds

Her head, and nothing loth her Majesty  
Renounces, till among the scattered clouds  
One with its kindling edge declares that  
soon

Will reappear before the uplifted eye  
A Form as bright, as beautiful a moon,  
To glide in open prospect through clear  
sky.

Pity that such a promise e'er should prove  
False in the issue, that yon seeming space  
Of sky should be in truth the stedfast face  
Of a cloud flat and dense, through which  
must move

(By transit not unlike man's frequent  
doom)

The Wanderer lost in more determined  
gloom.  
1846.

### ILLUSTRATED BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS

DISCOURSE was deemed Man's noblest  
attribute,

And written words the glory of his hand;  
Then followed Printing with enlarged  
command

For thought—dominion vast and absolute  
For spreading truth, and making love  
expand.

Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute  
Must lacquey a dumb Art that best can  
suit

The taste of this once-intellectual Land.  
A backward movement surely have we  
here,

From manhood,—back to childhood; for  
the age—

Back towards caverned life's first rude  
career.

Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!  
Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and  
ear

Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower  
stage!  
1846.



"THE UNREMITTING VOICE OF  
NIGHTLY STREAMS"

THE unremitting voice of nightly streams  
That wastes so oft, we think, its tuneful  
powers,

If neither soothing to the worm that gleams  
Through dewy grass, nor small birds hushed  
in bowers,

Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy flowers,—  
That voice of unpretending harmony  
(For who what is shall measure by what  
seems

To be, or not to be,  
Or tax high Heaven with prodigality?)  
Wants not a healing influence that can  
creep

Into the human breast, and mix with sleep  
To regulate the motion of our dreams  
For kindly issues—as through every clime  
Was felt near murmuring brooks in earliest  
time;

As at this day, the rudest swains who dwell  
Where torrents roar, or hear the tinkling  
knell

Of water-breaks, with grateful heart could  
tell. 1846.

SONNET

TO AN OCTOGENARIAN

AFFECTIONS lose their object; Time brings  
forth

No successors; and, lodged in memory,  
If love exist no longer, it must die,—  
Wanting accustomed food, must pass from  
earth,

Or never hope to reach a second birth.  
This sad belief, the happiest that is left  
To thousands, share not Thou; howe'er  
bereft,

Scorned, or neglected, fear not such a  
dearth.

Though poor and destitute of friends thou  
art,

Perhaps the sole survivor of thy race,  
One to whom Heaven assigns that mourn-  
ful part

The utmost solitude of age to face,  
Still shall be left some corner of the heart  
Where Love for living Thing can find a  
place. 1846.

ON THE BANKS OF A ROCKY  
STREAM

BEHOLD an emblem of our human mind  
Crowded with thoughts that need a settled  
home,

Yet, like to eddying balls of foam  
Within this whirlpool, they each other  
chase

Round and round, and neither find  
An outlet nor a resting-place!  
Stranger, if such disquietude be thine,  
Fall on thy knees and sue for help divine.  
1846.

ODE ON THE INSTALLATION OF  
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE  
ALBERT AS CHANCELLOR OF  
THE UNIVERSITY OF CAM-  
BRIDGE, JULY 1847

INTRODUCTION AND CHORUS

For thirst of power that Heaven dis-  
owns,  
For temples, towers, and thrones,  
Too long insulted by the Spoiler's shock,  
Indignant Europe cast  
Her stormy foe at last  
To reap the whirlwind on a Libyan rock.

SOLO—(TENOR)

War is passion's basest game  
Madly played to win a name;  
Up starts some tyrant, Earth and Heaven  
to dare,  
The servile million bow;  
But will the lightning glance aside to spare  
The Despot's laurelled brow?

CHORUS

War is mercy, glory, fame,  
Waged in Freedom's holy cause;  
Freedom, such as Man may claim  
Under God's restraining laws.  
Such is Albion's fame and glory:  
Let rescued Europe tell the story.

RECIT. (*accompanied*)—(CONTRALTO)

But lo, what sudden cloud has darkened  
all

The land as with a funeral pall?  
The Rose of England suffers blight,  
The flower has drooped, the Isle's delight,  
Flower and bud together fall—  
A Nation's hopes lie crushed in Claremont's  
desolate hall.

AIR—(SOPRANO)

Time a chequered mantle wears;—  
Earth awakes from wintry sleep;  
Again the Tree a blossom bears—  
Cease, Britannia, cease to weep!  
Hark to the peals on this bright May  
morn!  
They tell that your future Queen is born.

SOPRANO SOLO AND CHORUS

A Guardian Angel fluttered  
Above the Babe, unseen;  
One word he softly uttered—  
It named the future Queen:  
And a joyful cry through the Island  
rang,  
As clear and bold as the trumpet's  
clang,  
As bland as the reed of peace—  
"VICTORIA be her name!"  
For righteous triumphs are the base  
Whereon Britannia rests her peaceful  
fame.

QUARTET

Time, in his mantle's sunniest fold,  
Uplifted in his arms the child;  
And, while the fearless Infant smiled,  
Her happier destiny foretold:—  
"Infancy, by Wisdom mild,  
Trained to health and artless beauty;  
Youth, by pleasure unbeguiled  
From the lore of lofty duty;  
Womanhood is pure renown,  
Seated on her lineal throne:  
Leaves of myrtle in her Crown,  
Fresh with lustre all their own.  
Love, the treasure worth possessing,  
More than all the world beside,

This shall be her choicest blessing,  
Oft to royal hearts denied."

RECIT. (*accompanied*)—(BASS)

That eve, the Star of Brunswick shone  
With stedfast ray benign  
On Gotha's ducal roof, and on  
The softly flowing Leine;  
Nor failed to gild the spires of Bonn,  
And glittered on the Rhine—  
Old Camus, too, on that prophetic night  
Was conscious of the ray;  
And his willows whispered in its light,  
Not to the Zephyr's sway,  
But with a Delphic life, in sight  
Of this auspicious day:

CHORUS

This day, when Granta hails her chosen  
Lord,  
And proud of her award,  
Confiding in the Star serene,  
Welcomes the Consort of a happy Queen.

AIR—(CONTRALTO)

Prince, in these Collegiate bowers,  
Where Science, leagued with holier  
truth,  
Guards the sacred heart of youth,  
Solemn monitors are ours.  
These reverend aisles, these hallowed  
towers,  
Raised by many a hand august,  
Are haunted by majestic Powers,  
The memories of the Wise and Just,  
Who, faithful to a pious trust,  
Here, in the Founder's spirit sought  
To mould and stamp the ore of thought  
In that bold form and impress high  
That best betoken patriot loyalty.  
Not in vain those Sages taught,—  
True disciples, good as great,  
Have pondered here their country's weal,  
Weighed the Future by the Past,  
Learned how social frames may last,  
And how a Land may rule its fate  
By constancy inviolate,  
Though worlds to their foundations reel  
The sport of factious Hate or godless Zeal.

## AIR—(BASS)

Albert, in thy race we cherish  
 A Nation's strength that will not  
     perish  
 While England's sceptred Line  
 True to the King of Kings is found ;  
 Like that Wise ancestor of thine  
 Who threw the Saxon shield o'er Luther's  
     life,  
 When first above the yells of bigot strife  
     The trumpet of the Living Word  
 Assumed a voice of deep portentous sound,  
 From gladdened Elbe to startled Tiber  
     heard.

## CHORUS

What shield more sublime  
 E'er was blazoned or sung ?  
 And the PRINCE whom we greet  
 From its Hero is sprung.  
     Resound, resound the strain,  
     That hails him for our own !  
 Again, again, and yet again,  
 For the Church, the State, the Throne !  
 And that Presence fair and bright,  
 Ever blest wherever seen,  
 Who deigns to grace our festal rite,  
 The pride of the Islands, VICTORIA  
     THE QUEEN.

## NOTES

### Page 23

*'And, hovering, round it often did a  
raven fly.'*

From a short MS. poem read to me when an undergraduate, by my schoolfellow and friend, Charles Farish, long since deceased. The verses were by a brother of his, a man of promising genius, who died young.

### Page 34

*'The Borderers.'*

This Dramatic Piece, as noticed in its title-page, was composed in 1795-96. It lay nearly from that time till within the last two or three months unregarded among my papers, without being mentioned even to my most intimate friends. Having, however, impressions upon my mind which made me unwilling to destroy the MS., I determined to undertake the responsibility of publishing it during my own life, rather than impose upon my successors the task of deciding its fate. Accordingly it has been revised with some care; but, as it was at first written, and is now published, without any view to its exhibition upon the stage, not the slightest alteration has been made in the conduct of the story, or the composition of the characters; above all, in respect to the two leading Persons of the Drama, I felt no inducement to make any change. The study of human nature suggests this awful truth, that as in the trials to which life subjects us, sin and crime are apt to start from their very opposite qualities, so are there no limits to the hardening of the heart and the perversion of the understanding to which they may carry their slaves. During my long residence in France, while

the Revolution was rapidly advancing to its extreme of wickedness, I had frequent opportunities of being an eye-witness of this process, and it was while that knowledge was fresh upon my memory that the Tragedy of "The Borderers" was composed.

### Page 179

*'Jones! as from Calais southward.'*

(See Dedication to Descriptive Sketches.)

This excellent Person, one of my earliest and dearest friends, died in the year 1835. We were undergraduates together of the same year, at the same college; and companions in many a delightful ramble through his own romantic Country of North Wales. Much of the latter part of his life he passed in comparative solitude, which I know was often cheered by remembrance of our youthful adventures, and of the beautiful regions which, at home and abroad, we had visited together. Our long friendship was never subject to a moment's interruption,—and, while revising these volumes for the last time, I have been so often reminded of my loss, with a not unpleasing sadness, that I trust the Reader will excuse this passing mention of a Man who well deserves from me something more than so brief a notice. Let me only add, that during the middle part of his life he resided many years (as Incumbent of the Living) at a Parsonage in Oxfordshire, which is the subject of the sonnet entitled "A Parsonage in Oxfordshire," p. 607.

### Page 180

In this and a succeeding Sonnet on the same subject, let me be understood as a Poet availing himself of the situation which

the King of Sweden occupied, and of the principles AVOWED IN HIS MANIFESTOS; as laying hold of these advantages for the purpose of embodying moral truths. This remark might, perhaps, as well have been suppressed; for to those who may be in sympathy with the course of these Poems, it will be superfluous, and will, I fear, be thrown away upon that other class, whose besotted admiration of the intoxicated despot hereafter placed in contrast with him, is the most melancholy evidence of degradation in British feeling and intellect which the times have furnished.

Page 184

'To the Daisy.'

This Poem, and two others to the same Flower, were written in the year 1802; which is mentioned, because in some of the ideas, though not in the manner in which those ideas are connected, and likewise even in some of the expressions, there is a resemblance to passages in a Poem (lately published) of Mr. Montgomery's, entitled, a Field Flower. This being said, Mr. Montgomery will not think any apology due to him; I cannot, however, help addressing him in the words of the Father of English Poets.

"Though it happe me to rehersin—  
That ye han in your freshe songis said,  
Forberith me, and beth not ill apaid,  
Sith that ye se I doe it in the honour  
Of Love, and eke in service of the Flour."  
1807.

Page 190

The following is extracted from the journal of my fellow-traveller, to which, as persons acquainted with my poems will know, I have been obliged on other occasions:—

"Dumfries, August 1803.

"On our way to the churchyard where Burns is buried, we were accompanied by a bookseller, who showed us the outside of Burns's house, where he had lived the last three years of his life, and where he died. It has a mean appearance, and is in a bye situation; the front whitewashed; dirty about the doors, as most Scotch houses are; flowering plants in the window.

Went to visit his grave; he lies in a corner of the churchyard, and his second son Francis Wallace, beside him. There is a stone to mark the spot; but a hundred guineas have been collected to be expended upon some sort of monument. 'There said the bookseller, pointing to a pompous monument, 'lies Mr.'—(I have forgotten the name)—'a remarkably clever man; he was an attorney, and scarcely ever lost a cause he undertook. Burns made many a lampoon upon him, and there they rest as you see.' We looked at Burns's grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own poet's epitaph:—

'Is there a man,' etc.

"The churchyard is full of grave-stones and expensive monuments, in all sorts of fantastic shapes, obelisk-wise, pillar-wise, etc. When our guide had left us we turned again to Burns's grave, and afterwards went to his house, wishing to inquire after Mrs. Burns, who was gone to spend some time by the seashore with her children. We spoke to the maid-servant at the door, who invited us forward, and we sat down in the parlour. The walls were coloured with a blue wash; on one side of the fire was a mahogany desk; opposite the window a clock, which Burns mentions, in one of his letters, having received as a present. The house was cleanly and neat in the inside, the stairs of stone scoured white, the kitchen on the right side of the passage, the parlour on the left. In the room above the parlour the poet died, and his son, very lately, in the same room. The servant told us she had lived four years with Mrs. Burns, who was now in great sorrow for the death of Wallace. She said that Mrs. B.'s youngest son was now at Christ's Hospital. We were glad to leave Dumfries, where we could think of little but poor Burns, and his moving about on that unpoetic ground. In our road to Brownhill, the next stage, we passed Ellisland, at a little distance on our right—his farm-house. Our pleasure in looking round would have been still greater, if the road had led us nearer the spot.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I cannot take leave of this country

which we passed through to-day, without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland mountains within half-a-mile of Ellisland, Burns's house, the last view we had of them. Drayton has prettily described the connection which this neighbourhood has with ours, when he makes Skiddaw say,—

'Scruffel, from the sky  
That Annandale doth crown, with a most amorous  
eye  
Salutes me every day, or at my pride looks grim,  
Oft threatening me with clouds, as I oft threaten  
him.'

"These lines came to my brother's memory, as well as the Cumberland saying,—

'If Skiddaw hath a cap  
Scruffel wots well of that.'

"We talked of Burns, and of the prospect he must have had, perhaps from his own door, of Skiddaw and his companions; indulging ourselves in the fancy that we might have been personally known to each other, and he have looked upon those objects with more pleasure for our sakes."

#### Page 202

'*The Farmer of Tilsbury Vale.*'

With this picture, which was taken from real life, compare the imaginative one of "The Reverie of Poor Susan," p. 72; and see (to make up the deficiencies of this class) "The Excursion," *passim*.

#### Page 208

'*The Seven Sisters.*'

The Story of this Poem is from the German of FREDERICA BRUN.

#### Page 219

'*Moss Campion (Silene acaulis).*'

This most beautiful plant is scarce in England, though it is found in great abundance upon the mountains of Scotland. The first specimen I ever saw of it, in its native bed, was singularly fine, the tuft or cushion being at least eight inches in diameter, and the root proportionably thick. I have only met with it in two

places among our mountains, in both of which I have since sought for it in vain.

Botanists will not, I hope, take it ill, if I caution them against carrying off, inconsiderately, rare and beautiful plants. This has often been done, particularly from Ingleborough and other mountains in Yorkshire, till the species have totally disappeared, to the great regret of lovers of nature living near the places where they grew.

#### Page 225

'*The Waggoner.*'

Several years after the event that forms the subject of the Poem, in company with my friend, the late Mr. Coleridge, I happened to fall in with the person to whom the name of Benjamin is given. Upon our expressing regret that we had not, for a long time, seen upon the road either him or his waggon, he said, "They could not do without me; and as to the man who was put in my place, no good could come out of him; he was a man of no ideas."

The fact of my discarded hero's getting the horses out of a great difficulty with a word, as related in the poem, was told me by an eye-witness.

#### Page 225

'*The buzzing dor-hawk, round and round, is wheeling,—*'

When the Poem was first written the note of the bird was thus described:—

"The Night-hawk is singing his frog-like tune,  
Twirling his watchman's rattle about—"

but from unwillingness to startle the reader at the outset by so bold a mode of expression, the passage was altered as it now stands.

#### Page 230

After the line, "*Can any mortal clog come to her,*" followed in the MS. an incident which has been kept back. Part of the suppressed verses shall here be given as a gratification of private feeling, which the well-disposed reader will find no difficulty in excusing. They are now printed for the first time.

"Can any mortal clog come to her?  
It can : \* \* \* \* \*

But Benjamin, in his vexation,  
Possesses inward consolation ;  
He knows his ground, and hopes to find  
A spot with all things to his mind,  
An upright mural block of stone,  
Moist with pure water trickling down.  
A slender spring ; but kind to man  
It is, a true Samaritan ;  
Close to the highway, pouring out  
Its offering from a chink or spout ;  
Whence all, howe'er athirst, or drooping  
With toil, may drink, and without stooping.  
Cries Benjamin, 'Where is it, where?  
Voice it hath none, but must be near.'  
—A star, declining towards the west,  
Upon the watery surface threw  
Its image tremulously impest,  
That just marked out the object and withdrew :  
Right welcome service ! \* \* \* \* \*

#### ROCK OF NAMES !

Light is the strain, but not unjust  
To Thee, and thy memorial-trust  
That once seemed only to express .  
Love that was love in idleness ;  
Tokens, as year hath followed year  
How changed, alas, in character !  
For they were graven on thy smooth breast  
By hands of those my soul loved best ;  
Meek women, men as true and brave  
As ever went to a hopeful grave :  
Their hands and mine, when side by side  
With kindred zeal and mutual pride,  
We worked until the Initials took  
Shapes that defied a scornful look.—  
Long as for us a genial feeling  
Survives, or one in need of healing,  
The power, dear Rock, around thee cast,  
Thy monumental power, shall last  
For me and mine ! O thought of pain,  
That would impair it or profane !  
Take all in kindness then, as said  
With a staid heart but playful head ;  
And fail not Thou, loved Rock ! to keep  
Thy charge when we are laid asleep."

#### Page 344

'Descend, prophetic Spirit ! that inspir'st  
The human Soul,' etc.

"Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic Soul  
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come."

*Shakspeare's Sonnets.*

#### Page 346

'The Horn of Egremont Castle.'

This story is a Cumberland tradition. I have heard it also related of the Hall of Hutton John, an ancient residence of the Hudlestons, in a sequestered valley upon the river Dacor.

#### Page 357

'Danger which they fear, and honour  
which they understand not.'

Words in Lord Brooke's Life of Sir P. Sidney.

#### Page 361

Mrs. Wordsworth has a strong impression that "The Mother's Return" was written at Coleorton, where Miss Wordsworth was then staying with the children, during the absence of the former.

#### Page 363

'Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle.'

Henry Lord Clifford, etc., who is the subject of this Poem, was the son of John Lord Clifford, who was slain at Towton Field, which John Lord Clifford, as is known to the reader of English History, was the person who after the battle of Wakefield slew, in the pursuit, the young Earl of Rutland, son of the Duke of York, who had fallen in the battle, "in part of revenge" (say the Authors of the History of Cumberland and Westmoreland) ; "for the Earl's Father had slain his." A deed which worthily blemished the author (saith Speed) ; but who, as he adds, "dare promise any thing temperate of himself in the heat of martial fury ? chiefly, when it was resolved not to leave any branch of the York line standing ; for so one maketh this Lord to speak." This, no doubt, I would observe by the bye, was an action sufficiently in the vindictive spirit of the times, and yet not altogether so bad as represented ; "for the Earl was no child, as some writers would have him, but able to bear arms, being sixteen or seventeen years of age, as is evident from this (say the Memoirs of the Countess of Pembroke, who was laudably anxious to wipe away, as far as could be, this stigma from the

illustrious name to which she was born), that he was the next Child to King Edward the Fourth, which his mother had by Richard Duke of York, and that King was then eighteen years of age : and for the small distance betwixt her children, see Austin Vincent, in his Book of Nobility, p. 622, where he writes of them all." It may further be observed, that Lord Clifford, who was then himself only twenty-five years of age, had been a leading man and commander two or three years together in the army of Lancaster, before this time ; and, therefore, would be less likely to think that the Earl of Rutland might be entitled to mercy from his youth.—But, independent of this act, at best a cruel and savage one, the Family of Clifford had done enough to draw upon them the vehement hatred of the House of York : so that after the Battle of Towton there was no hope for them but in flight and concealment. Henry, the subject of the Poem, was deprived of his estate and honours during the space of twenty-four years ; all which time he lived as a shepherd in Yorkshire, or in Cumberland, where the estate of his Father-in-law (Sir Lancelot Threlkeld) lay. He was restored to his estate and honours in the first year of Henry the Seventh. It is recorded that, "when called to Parliament, he behaved nobly and wisely ; but otherwise came seldom to London or the Court ; and rather delighted to live in the country, where he repaired several of his Castles, which had gone to decay during the late troubles." Thus far is chiefly collected from Nicholson and Burn ; and I can add, from my own knowledge, that there is a tradition current in the village of Threlkeld and its neighbourhood, his principal retreat, that in the course of his shepherd-life he had acquired great astronomical knowledge. I cannot conclude this note without adding a word upon the subject of those numerous and noble feudal Edifices, spoken of in the Poem, the ruins of some of which are, at this day, so great an ornament to that interesting country. The Cliffords had always been distinguished for an honourable pride in these Castles ; and we have seen that, after the wars of York and Lancaster, they were rebuilt ; in the civil wars of Charles the First they were

again laid waste, and again restored almost to their former magnificence by the celebrated Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, etc. Not more than twenty-five years after this was done, when the estates of Clifford had passed into the Family of Tufton, three of these Castles, namely, Brough, Brougham, and Pendragon, were demolished, and the timber and other materials sold by Thomas Earl of Thanet. We will hope that, when this order was issued, the Earl had not consulted the text of Isaiah, 58th chap. 12th verse, to which the inscription placed over the gate of Pendragon Castle by the Countess of Pembroke (I believe his Grandmother), at the time she repaired that structure, refers the reader :—" *And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places : thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations ; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.*" The Earl of Thanet, the present possessor of the Estates, with a due respect for the memory of his ancestors, and a proper sense of the value and beauty of these remains of antiquity, has (I am told) given orders that they shall be preserved from all depredations.

#### Page 364

*'Earth helped him with the cry of blood.'*

This line is from "The Battle of Bosworth Field," by Sir John Beaumont (brother to the Dramatist), whose poems are written with much spirit, elegance, and harmony, and have deservedly been reprinted lately in Chalmers's Collection of English Poets.

#### Page 365

*'And both the undying fish that swim  
Through Bowscale-tarn,' etc.*

It is imagined by the people of the country that there are two immortal Fish, inhabitants of this Tarn, which lies in the mountains not far from Threlkeld.—Blencathara, mentioned before, is the old and proper name of the mountain vulgarly called Saddleback.



## Page 365

*' Armour rusting in his halls  
On the blood of Clifford calls.'*

The martial character of the Cliffords is well known to the readers of English history; but it may not be improper here to say, by way of comment on these lines and what follows, that besides several others who perished in the same manner, the four immediate Progenitors of the Person in whose hearing this is supposed to be spoken all died in the Field.

## Page 365

*' The White Doe of Rylstone.'*

The Poem of the White Doe of Rylstone is founded on a local tradition, and on the Ballad in Percy's Collection, entitled "The Rising of the North." The tradition is as follows:—"About this time," not long after the Dissolution, "a White Doe," say the aged people of the neighbourhood, "long continued to make a weekly pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the Abbey Churchyard during divine service; after the close of which she returned home as regularly as the rest of the congregation."—DR. WHITAKER'S *History of the Deanery of Craven*.—Rylstone was the property and residence of the Nortons, distinguished in that ill-advised and unfortunate Insurrection; which led me to connect with this tradition the principal circumstances of their fate, as recorded in the Ballad.

"Bolton Priory," says Dr. Whitaker in his excellent book, *The History and Antiquities of the Deanery of Craven*, "stands upon a beautiful curvature of the Wharf, on a level sufficiently elevated to protect it from inundations, and low enough for every purpose of picturesque effect.

"Opposite to the East window of the Priory Church, the river washes the foot of a rock nearly perpendicular, and of the richest purple, where several of the mineral beds, which break out instead of maintaining their usual inclination to the horizon, are twisted by some inconceivable process into undulating and spiral lines. To the South all is soft and delicious; the eye reposes upon a few rich pastures, a moder-

ate reach of the river, sufficiently tranquil to form a mirror to the sun, and the bounding hills beyond, neither too near nor too lofty to exclude, even in winter, any portion of his rays.

"But after all, the glories of Bolton are on the North. Whatever the most fastidious taste could require to constitute a perfect landscape, is not only found here, but in its proper place. In front, and immediately under the eye, is a smooth expanse of park-like enclosure, spotted with native elm, ash, etc. of the finest growth: on the right a skirting oak wood, with jutting points of grey rock; on the left a rising copse. Still forward are seen the aged groves of Bolton Park, the growth of centuries; and farther yet, the barren and rocky distances of Simon-seat and Barden Fell contrasted with the warmth, fertility, and luxuriant foliage of the valley below.

"About half a mile above Bolton the valley closes, and either side of the Wharf is overhung by solemn woods, from which huge perpendicular masses of grey rock jut out at intervals.

"This sequestered scene was almost inaccessible till of late, that ridings have been cut on both sides of the river, and the most interesting points laid open by judicious thinnings in the woods. Here a tributary stream rushes from a waterfall, and bursts through a woody glen to mingle its waters with the Wharf: there the Wharf itself is nearly lost in a deep cleft in the rock, and next becomes a horned flood enclosing a woody island—sometimes it reposes for a moment, and then resumes its native character, lively, irregular, and impetuous.

"The cleft mentioned above is the tremendous STRID. This chasm, being incapable of receiving the winter floods, has formed on either side a broad strand of naked gritstone full of rock-basins, or 'pots of the Linn,' which bear witness to the restless impetuosity of so many Northern torrents. But, if here Wharf is lost to the eye, it amply repays another sense by its deep and solemn roar, like 'the Voice of the angry Spirit of the Waters,' heard far above and beneath, amidst the silence of the surrounding woods.

"The terminating object of the landscape is the remains of Barden Tower, interesting from their form and situation, and still more so from the recollections which they excite."

## Page 367

*'Action is transitory—'*

This and the five lines that follow were either read or recited by me, more than thirty years since, to the late Mr. Hazlitt, who quoted some expressions in them (imperfectly remembered) in a work of his published several years ago.

## Page 367

*'From Bolton's old monastic tower.'*

It is to be regretted that at the present day Bolton Abbey wants this ornament: but the Poem, according to the imagination of the Poet, is composed in Queen Elizabeth's time. "Formerly," says Dr. Whitaker, "over the Transept was a tower. This is proved not only from the mention of bells at the Dissolution, when they could have had no other place, but from the pointed roof of the choir, which must have terminated westward, in some building of superior height to the ridge."

## Page 367

*'A Chapel, like a wild-bird's nest.'*

"The Nave of the Church having been reserved at the Dissolution for the use of the Saxon Cure, is still a parochial Chapel; and, at this day, is as well kept as the neatest English Cathedral."

## Page 367

*'Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak!'*

"At a small distance from the great gateway stood the Prior's Oak, which was felled about the year 1720, and sold for 70*l*. According to the price of wood at that time, it could scarcely have contained less than 1400 feet of timber."

## Page 369

*'When Lady Aëlina mourned.'*

The detail of this tradition may be found in Dr. Whitaker's book, and in a Poem of this Collection, "The Force of Prayer."

## Page 369

*'Pass, pass who will, yon chantry door.'*

"At the East end of the North aisle of Bolton Priory Church, is a chantry belonging to Bethmesley Hall, and a vault where, according to tradition, the Claphams" (who inherited this estate, by the female line, from the Mauleverers) "were interred upright." John de Clapham, of whom this ferocious act is recorded, was a man of great note in his time: "he was a vehement partisan of the house of Lancaster, in whom the spirit of his chieftains, the Cliffords, seemed to survive."

## Page 370

*'Who loved the Shepherd-lord to meet.'*

Among these Poems will be found one entitled, "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, upon the Restoration of Lord Clifford, the Shepherd, to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors." To that Poem is annexed an account of this personage, chiefly extracted from Burn and Nicholson's History of Cumberland and Westmoreland. It gives me pleasure to add these further particulars concerning him, from Dr. Whitaker, who says he "retired to the solitude of Barden, where he seems to have enlarged the tower out of a common keeper's lodge, and where he found a retreat equally favourable to taste, to instruction, and to devotion. The narrow limits of his residence show that he had learned to despise the pomp of greatness, and that a small train of servants could suffice him, who had lived to the age of thirty a servant himself. I think this nobleman resided here almost entirely when in Yorkshire, for all his charters which I have seen are dated at Barden."

"His early habits, and the want of those artificial measures of time which even shepherds now possess, had given him a turn for observing the motions of the heavenly bodies; and, having purchased such an apparatus as could then be procured, he amused and informed himself by those pursuits, with the aid of the Canons of Bolton, some of whom are said to have been well versed in what was then known of the science,

"I suspect this nobleman to have been sometimes occupied in a more visionary pursuit, and probably in the same company.

"For, from the family evidences, I have met with two MSS. on the subject of Alchemy, which, from the character, spelling, etc., may almost certainly be referred to the reign of Henry the Seventh. If these were originally deposited with the MSS. of the Cliffords, it might have been for the use of this nobleman. If they were brought from Bolton at the Dissolution, they must have been the work of those Canons whom he almost exclusively conversed with.

"In these peaceful employments Lord Clifford spent the whole reign of Henry the Seventh, and the first years of his son. But in the year 1513, when almost sixty years old, he was appointed to a principal command over the army which fought at Flodden, and showed that the military genius of the family had neither been chilled in him by age, nor extinguished by habits of peace.

"He survived the battle of Flodden ten years, and died April 23d, 1523, aged about 70. I shall endeavour to appropriate to him a tomb, vault, and chantry, in the choir of the church of Bolton, as I should be sorry to believe that he was deposited, when dead, at a distance from the place which in his lifetime he loved so well.

"By his last will he appointed his body to be interred at Shap, if he died in Westmoreland; or at Bolton, if he died in Yorkshire."

With respect to the Canons of Bolton, Dr. Whitaker shows from MSS. that not only alchemy but astronomy was a favourite pursuit with them.

#### Page 373

*'Now joy for you who from the towers  
Of Brancepeth look in doubt and fear.'*

Brancepeth Castle stands near the river Were, a few miles from the city of Durham. It formerly belonged to the Nevilles, Earls of Westmoreland. See Dr. Percy's account.

#### Page 375

*'Of mitred Thurston—what a Host  
He conquered!'*

See the Historians for the account of this memorable battle, usually denominated the Battle of the Standard.

#### Page 375

*'In that other day of Neville's Cross.'*

'In the night before the battle of Durham was stricken and begun, the 17th day of October, anno 1346, there did appear to John Fosse, then Prior of the abbey of Durham, a Vision, commanding him to take the holy Corporal-cloth, wherewith St. Cuthbert did cover the chalice when he used to say mass, and to put the same holy relique like to a banner-cloth upon the point of a spear, and the next morning to go and repair to a place on the west side of the city of Durham, called the Red Hills, where the Maid's Bower wont to be, and there to remain and abide till the end of the battle. To which vision the Prior obeying, and taking the same for a revelation of God's grace and mercy by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, did accordingly the next morning, with the monks of the said abbey, repair to the said Red Hills, and there most devoutly humbling and prostrating themselves in prayer for the victory in the said battle: (a great multitude of the Scots running and pressing by them, with intention to have spoiled them, yet had no power to commit any violence under such holy persons, so occupied in prayer, being protected and defended by the mighty Providence of Almighty God, and by the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, and the presence of the holy relique). And, after many conflicts and warlike exploits there had and done between the English men and the King of Scots and his company, the said battle ended, and the victory was obtained, to the great overthrow and confusion of the Scots, their enemies: And then the said Prior and monks accompanied with Ralph Lord Nevil, and John Nevil his son, and the Lord Percy, and many other nobles of England, returned home and went to the abbey church, there joining in hearty prayer and thanksgiving to God

and Holy St. Cuthbert for the victory achieved that day."

This battle was afterwards called the Battle of Neville's Cross from the following circumstance:—

"On the west side of the city of Durham, where two roads pass each other, a most notable, famous, and goodly cross of stone-work was erected and set up to the honour of God for the victory there obtained in the field of battle, and known by the name of Nevil's Cross, and built at the sole cost of the Lord Ralph Nevil, one of the most excellent and chief persons in the said battle." The Relique of St. Cuthbert afterwards became of great importance in military events. For soon after this battle, says the same author, "The Prior caused a goodly and sumptuous banner to be made," (which is then described at great length) "and in the midst of the same banner-cloth was the said holy relique and corporax-cloth enclosed, etc., and so sumptuously finished, and absolutely perfected, this banner was dedicated to Holy St. Cuthbert, of intent and purpose that for the future it should be carried to any battle, as occasion should serve; and was never carried and showed at any battle but by the especial grace of God Almighty, and the mediation of Holy St. Cuthbert, it brought home victory; which banner-cloth, after the dissolution of the abbey, fell into the possession of Dean WHITTINGHAM, whose wife, called KATHARINE, being a French woman (as is most credibly reported by eye-witnesses), did most injuriously burn the same in her fire, to the open contempt and disgrace of all ancient and goodly reliques."—Extracted from a book entitled "Durham Cathedral, as it stood before the Dissolution of the Monastery." It appears, from the old metrical History, that the above-mentioned banner was carried by the Earl of Surrey to Flodden Field.

#### Page 378

*'An edifice of warlike frame  
Stands single—Norton Tower its name—'*

It is so called to this day, and is thus described by Dr. Whitaker:—"Rylstone Fell yet exhibits a monument of the old

warfare between the Nortons and Cliffords. On a point of very high ground, commanding an immense prospect, and protected by two deep ravines, are the remains of a square tower, expressly said by Dodsworth to have been built by Richard Norton. The walls are of strong grout-work, about four feet thick. It seems to have been three stories high. Breaches have been industriously made in all the sides, almost to the ground, to render it untenable.

"But Norton Tower was probably a sort of pleasure-house in summer, as there are, adjoining to it, several large mounds (two of them are pretty entire), of which no other account can be given than that they were butts for large companies of archers.

"The place is savagely wild, and admirably adapted to the uses of a watch tower.'

#### Page 382

*—'despoil and desolation  
O'er Rylstone's fair domain have blown.'*

"After the attainder of Richard Norton, his estates were forfeited to the crown, where they remained till the 2d or 3d of James; they were then granted to Francis Earl of Cumberland." From an accurate survey made at that time, several particulars have been extracted by Dr. W. It appears that "the mansion-house was then in decay. Immediately adjoining is a close, called the Vivery, so called, undoubtedly, from the French Vivier, or modern Latin Vivarium; for there are near the house large remains of a pleasure-ground, such as were introduced in the earlier part of Elizabeth's time, with topiary works, fish-ponds, an island, etc. The whole township was ranged by an hundred and thirty red deer, the property of the Lord, which, together with the wood, had, after the attainder of Mr. Norton, been committed to Sir Stephen Tempest. The wood, it seems, had been abandoned to depredations, before which time it appears that the neighbourhood must have exhibited a forest-like and sylvan scene. In this survey, among the old tenants is mentioned one Richard Kitchen, butler to Mr. Norton, who rose in rebellion with his master, and was executed at Rapon.

## Page 384

*'In the deep fork of Amerdale.'*

"At the extremity of the parish of Burnsal, the valley of Wharf forks off into two great branches, one of which retains the name of Wharfedale, to the source of the river; the other is usually called Littondale, but more anciently and properly, Amerdale. Dernbrook, which runs along an obscure valley from the N.W., is derived from a Teutonic word, signifying concealment." — DR. WHITAKER.

## Page 384

*'When the bells of Rylstone played  
Their Sabbath music—"God us ayde!"'*

On one of the bells of Rylstone church, which seems coeval with the building of the tower, is this cypher, "X. N." for John Norton, and the motto, "God us ayde."

## Page 385

*'The grassy rock-encircled Pound.'*

Which is thus described by Dr. Whitaker: — "On the plain summit of the hill are the foundations of a strong wall stretching from the S.W. to the N.E. corner of the tower, and to the edge of a very deep glen. From this glen, a ditch, several hundred yards long, runs south to another deep and rugged ravine. On the N. and W., where the banks are very steep, no wall or mound is discoverable, paling being the only fence that could stand on such ground.

"From the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, it appears that such pounds for deer, sheep, etc., were far from being uncommon in the south of Scotland. The principle of them was something like that of a wire mouse-trap. On the declivity of a steep hill, the bottom and sides of which were fenced so as to be impassable, a wall was constructed nearly level with the surface on the outside, yet so high within, that without wings it was impossible to escape in the opposite direction. Care was probably taken that these enclosures should contain better feed than the neighbouring parks or forests; and whoever is acquainted with the habits of these sequacious animals, will easily conceive, that if the leader was once

tempted to descend into the snare, a herd would follow."

I cannot conclude without recommending to the notice of all lovers of beautiful scenery Bolton Abbey and its neighbourhood. This enchanting spot belongs to the Duke of Devonshire; and the superintendence of it has for some years been entrusted to the Rev. William Carr, who has most skilfully opened out its features; and, in whatever he has added, has done justice to the place, by working with an invisible hand of art in the very spirit of nature.

## Page 389

*'Zaragoza.'*

In this Sonnet I am under some obligations to one of an Italian author, to which I cannot refer.

## Page 420

*'—much did he see of men.'*

At the risk of giving a shock to the prejudices of artificial society, I have ever been ready to pay homage to the aristocracy of nature; under a conviction that vigorous human-heartedness is the constituent principle of true taste. It may still, however, be satisfactory to have prose testimony how far a Character, employed for purposes of imagination, is founded upon general fact. I, therefore, subjoin an extract from an author who had opportunities of being well acquainted with a class of men, from whom my own personal knowledge emboldened me to draw this portrait.

"We learn from Cæsar and other Roman Writers, that the travelling merchants who frequented Gaul and other barbarous countries, either newly conquered by the Roman arms, or bordering on the Roman conquests, were ever the first to make the inhabitants of those countries familiarly acquainted with the Roman modes of life, and to inspire them with an inclination to follow the Roman fashions, and to enjoy Roman conveniences. In North America, travelling merchants from the Settlements have done and continue to do much more towards civilising the Indian natives, than all the missionaries, papist or protestant, who have ever been sent among them.

"It is farther to be observed, for the credit of this most useful class of men, that they commonly contribute, by their personal manners, no less than by the sale of their wares, to the refinement of the people among whom they travel. Their dealings form them to great quickness of wit and acuteness of judgment. Having constant occasion to recommend themselves and their goods, they acquire habits of the most obliging attention, and the most insinuating address. As in their peregrinations they have opportunity of contemplating the manners of various men and various cities, they become eminently skilled in the knowledge of the world. *As they wander, each alone, through thinly-inhabited districts, they form habits of reflection and of sublime contemplation.* With all these qualifications, no wonder that they should often be, in remote parts of the country, the best mirrors of fashion, and censors of manners; and should contribute much to polish the roughness and soften the rusticity of our peasantry. It is not more than twenty or thirty years since a young man going from any part of Scotland to England, of purpose to *carry the pack*, was considered as going to lead the life and acquire the fortune of a gentleman. When, after twenty years' absence in that honourable line of employment, he returned with his acquisitions to his native country, he was regarded as a gentleman to all intents and purposes."

*Heron's Journey in Scotland*, vol. i. p. 89.

#### Page 441

*'Lost in unsearchable eternity!'*

Since this paragraph was composed, I have read with so much pleasure, in Burnet's *Theory of the Earth*, a passage expressing corresponding sentiments, excited by objects of a similar nature, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it.

"Siquid verò Natura nobis dedit speculaculum, in hac tellure, verè gratum, et philosopho dignum, id semel mihi contigisse arbitror; cùm ex celsissimâ rupe speculabundus ad oram maris Mediterranei, hinc æquor cæruleum, illinc tractus Alpinos prospexi; nihil quidem magis dispar aut dissimile, nec in suo genere, magis egregium

et singulare. Hoc theatrum ego facilè prætulerim Romanis cunctis, Græcisve; atque id quod natura hic spectandum exhibet, scenicis ludis omnibus, aut amphitheatri certaminibus. Nihil hic elegans aut venustum, sed ingens et magnificum, et quod placet magnitudine suâ et quâdam specie immensitatis. Hinc intuebar maris æquabilem superficiem, usque et usque diffusam, quantum maximùm oculorum acies ferri potuit; illinc disruptissimam terræ faciem, et vastas moles variè elevatas aut depressas, erectas, propendentes, reclinatas, coacervatas, omni situ inæquali et turbido. Placuit, ex hac parte, Naturæ unitas et simplicitas, et inexhausta quædam planities; ex alterâ, multiformis confusio magnorum corporum et insanæ rerum strages: quas cùm intuebar, non urbis alicujus aut oppidi, sed confracti mundi rudera, ante oculos habere mihi visus sum.

In singulis ferè montibus erat aliquid insolens et mirabile, sed præ cæteris mihi placebat illa, quâ sedebam, rupes; erat maxima et altissima, et quâ terram respiciebat, molliori ascensu altitudinem suam dissimulabat: quâ verò mare, horrendùm præceps, et quasi ad perpendicularum facta, instar parietis. Præterea facies illa marina adeò erat lævis ac uniformis (quod in rupibus aliquando observare licet) ac si scissa fuisset à summo ad imum, in illo plano; vel terræ motu aliquo, aut fulmine, divulsa.

Ima pars rupis erat cava, recessusque habuit, et saxeos specus, euntes in vacuum montem; sive naturâ pridem factos, sive exesos mari, et undarum crebris ictibus: In hos enim cum impetu ruebant et fragore, æstuantis maris fluctus; quos iterum spumantes reddidit antrum, et quasi ab imo ventre evomuit.

Dextrum latus montis erat præruptum, aspero saxo et nudâ caute: sinistrum non adeò neglexerat Natura, arboribus utpote ornatum: et prope pedem montis rivus limpide aque prorupit; qui cùm vicinam vallem irrigaverat, lento motu serpens, et per varios mæandros, quasi ad protrahendam vitam, in magno mari absorptus subito periit. Denique in summo vertice promontorii, commodè eminebat saxum, cui insidebam contemplabundus. Vale augusta sedes. Rege digna: Augusta rupes, semper

mihi memoranda!" P. 89. *Telluris Theoria sacra, etc., Editio secunda.*

Page 451

'Of Mississippi, or that northern stream.'

"A man is supposed to improve by going out into the *World*, by visiting *London*. Artificial man does; he extends with his sphere; but, alas! that sphere is microscopic; it is formed of minutiae, and he surrenders his genuine vision to the artist, in order to embrace it in his ken. His bodily senses grow acute, even to barren and inhuman pruriency; while his mental become proportionally obtuse. The reverse is the Man of Mind: he who is placed in the sphere of Nature and of God, might be a mock at Tattersall's and Brooks's, and a sneer at St. James's: he would certainly be swallowed alive by the first *Pisarro* that crossed him:—But when he walks along the river of Amazons; when he rests his eye on the unrivalled Andes; when he measures the long and watered savannah; or contemplates, from a sudden promontory, the distant, vast Pacific—and feels himself a freeman in this vast theatre, and commanding each ready produced fruit of this wilderness, and each progeny of this stream—his exultation is not less than imperial. He is as gentle, too, as he is great: his emotions of tenderness keep pace with his elevation of sentiment; for he says, 'These were made by a good Being, who, unsought by me, placed me here to enjoy them.' He becomes at once a child and a king. His mind is in himself; from hence he argues, and from hence he acts, and he argues unerringly, and acts magisterially: his mind in himself is also in his God; and therefore he loves, and therefore he soars."—From the notes upon *The Hurricane*, a Poem, by *William Gilbert*.

The Reader, I am sure, will thank me for the above quotation, which, though from a strange book, is one of the finest passages of modern English prose.

Page 454

'Tis, by comparison, an easy task  
Earth to despise,' etc.

See, upon this subject, Baxter's most

interesting review of his own opinions and sentiments in the decline of life. It may be found (lately reprinted) in Dr. Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*.

Page 455

'Alas! the endowment of immortal Power  
Is matched unequally with custom, time,' etc.

This subject is treated at length in the Ode—Intimations of Immortality, page 357.

Page 456

'Knowing the heart of man is set to be,' etc.

The passage quoted from Daniel is taken from a poem addressed to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, and the two last lines, printed in Italics, are by him translated from Seneca. The whole Poem is very beautiful. I will transcribe four stanzas from it, as they contain an admirable picture of the state of a wise Man's mind in a time of public commotion.

Nor is he moved with all the thunder-cracks  
Of tyrant's threats, or with the surly brow  
Of Power, that proudly sits on others' crimes;  
Charged with more crying sins than those he  
checks.

The storms of sad confusion that may grow  
Up in the present for the coming times,  
Appal not him; that hath no side at all,  
But of himself, and knows the worst can fall.

Although his heart (so near allied to earth)  
Cannot but pity the perplexed state  
Of troublous and distressed mortality,  
That thus make way unto the ugly birth  
Of their own sorrows, and do still beget  
Affliction upon Imbecility:  
Yet seeing thus the course of things must run,  
He looks thereon not strange, but as fore-done.

And whilst distraught ambition compasses,  
And is encompassed, while as craft deceives,  
And is deceived: whilst man doth ransack man,  
And builds on blood, and rises by distress;  
And th' Inheritance of desolation leaves  
To great-expecting hopes: He looks thereon,  
As from the shore of peace, with unwet eye,  
And bears no venture in Impiety.

Thus, Lady, fares that man that hath prepared  
A rest for his desires; and sees all things  
Beneath him; and hath learned this book of man,  
Full of the notes of frailty; and compared

The best of glory with her sufferings :  
 By whom, I see, you labour all you can  
 To plant your heart ! and set your thoughts as  
 near  
 His glorious mansion as your powers can bear.

Page 477

' Or rather, as we stand on holy earth,  
 And have the dead around us.'

Leo. You, Sir, could help me to the history  
 Of half these graves ?

Priest. For eight-score winters past,  
 With what I've witnessed, and with what I've  
 heard,

Perhaps I might ; . . . . .  
 By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,  
 We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round ;  
 Yet all in the broad highway of the world.

*See the Brothers.*

Page 482

' And suffering Nature grieved that one  
 should die.'

*Southey's Retrospect.*

Page 482

' And whence that tribute ? wherefore these  
 regards ?'

The sentiments and opinions here uttered  
 are in unison with those expressed in the  
 following Essay upon Epitaphs, which was  
 furnished by me for Mr. Coleridge's  
 periodical work, *The Friend* ; and as they  
 are dictated by a spirit congenial to that  
 which pervades this and the two succeeding  
 books, the sympathising reader will not be  
 displeased to see the Essay here annexed.

## ESSAY UPON EPITAPHS

It needs scarcely be said, that an  
 Epitaph presupposes a Monument, upon  
 which it is to be engraven. Almost all  
 Nations have wished that certain external  
 signs should point out the places where  
 their dead are interred. Among savage  
 tribes unacquainted with letters this has  
 mostly been done either by rude stones  
 placed near the graves, or by mounds of  
 earth raised over them. This custom pro-  
 ceeded obviously from a twofold desire :

first to guard the remains of the deceased  
 from irreverent approach or from savage  
 violation : and secondly to preserve their  
 memory. " Never any," says Camden,  
 " neglected burial but some savage nations ;  
 as the Bactrians, which cast their dead to  
 the dogs ; some varlet philosophers, as  
 Diogenes, who desired to be devoured of  
 fishes ; some dissolute courtiers, as Mæcenas,  
 who was wont to say, Non tumulum curo ;  
 sepelit natura relictos.

' I'm careless of a grave :—Nature her dead will  
 save.'"

As soon as nations had learned the use  
 of letters, epitaphs were inscribed upon  
 these monuments ; in order that their  
 intention might be more surely and ade-  
 quately fulfilled. I have derived monuments  
 and epitaphs from two sources of feeling,  
 but these do in fact resolve themselves into  
 one. The invention of epitaphs, Weever,  
 in his Discourse of Funeral Monuments,  
 says rightly, " proceeded from the presage  
 or fore-feeling of immortality, implanted in  
 all men naturally, and is referred to the  
 scholars of Linus the Theban poet, who  
 flourished about the year of the world two  
 thousand seven hundred ; who first bewailed  
 this Linus their Master, when he was slain,  
 in doleful verses, then called of him *Ælina*,  
 afterwards Epitaphia, for that they were  
 first sung at burials, after engraved upon  
 the sepulchres."

And, verily, without the consciousness of  
 a principle of immortality in the human  
 soul, Man could never have had awakened  
 in him the desire to live in the remembrance  
 of his fellows : mere love, or the yearning  
 of kind towards kind, could not have pro-  
 duced it. The dog or horse perishes in the  
 field, or in the stall, by the side of his com-  
 panions, and is incapable of anticipating  
 the sorrow with which his surrounding  
 associates shall bemoan his death, or pine  
 for his loss ; he cannot pre-conceive this  
 regret, he can form no thought of it ; and  
 therefore cannot possibly have a desire to  
 leave such regret or remembrance behind  
 him. Add to the principle of love which  
 exists in the inferior animals, the faculty of  
 reason which exists in Man alone ; will the  
 conjunction of these account for the desire ?  
 Doubtless it is a necessary consequence of



this conjunction; yet not, I think, as a direct result, but only to be come at through an intermediate thought, viz. that of an intimation or assurance within us, that some part of our nature is imperishable. At least the precedence, in order of birth, of one feeling to the other, is unquestionable. If we look back upon the days of childhood, we shall find that the time is not in remembrance when, with respect to our own individual Being, the mind was without this assurance; whereas, the wish to be remembered by our friends or kindred after death, or even in absence, is, as we shall discover, a sensation that does not form itself till the *social* feelings have been developed, and the Reason has connected itself with a wide range of objects. Forlorn, and cut off from communication with the best part of his nature, must that man be, who should derive the sense of immortality, as it exists in the mind of a child, from the same unthinking gaiety or liveliness of animal spirits with which the lamb in the meadow or any other irrational creature is endowed; who should ascribe it, in short, to blank ignorance in the child; to an inability arising from the imperfect state of his faculties to come, in any point of his being, into contact with a notion of death; or to an unreflecting acquiescence in what has been instilled into him! Has such an unfold of the mysteries of nature, though he may have forgotten his former self, ever noticed the early, obstinate, and unappeasable inquisitiveness of children upon the subject of origination? This single fact proves outwardly the monstrousness of those suppositions: for, if we had no direct external testimony that the minds of very young children meditate feelingly upon death and immortality, these inquiries, which we all know they are perpetually making concerning the *whence*, do necessarily include correspondent habits of interrogation concerning the *whither*. Origin and tendency are notions inseparably co-relative. Never did a child stand by the side of a running stream, pondering within himself what power was the feeder of the perpetual current, from what never-wearied sources the body of water was supplied, but he must have been inevitably propelled to follow this question by another: "Towards what abyss is it in progress? what receptacle

can contain the mighty influx?" And the spirit of the answer must have been, though the word might be sea or ocean, accompanied perhaps with an image gathered from a map, or from the real object in nature—these might have been the *letter*, but the *spirit* of the answer must have been as inevitably, — a receptacle without bounds or dimensions; — nothing less than infinity. We may, then, be justified in asserting, that the sense of immortality, if not a co-existent and twin birth with Reason, is among the earliest of her offspring; and we may further assert, that from these conjoined, and under their countenance, the human affections are gradually formed and opened out. This is not the place to enter into the recesses of these investigations; but the subject requires me here to make a plain avowal, that, for my own part, it is to me inconceivable, that the sympathies of love towards each other, which grow with our growth, could ever attain any new strength, or even preserve the old, after we had received from the outward senses the impression of death, and were in the habit of having that impression daily renewed and its accompanying feeling brought home to ourselves, and to those we love; if the same were not counteracted by those communications with our internal Being, which are anterior to all these experiences, and with which revelation coincides, and has through that coincidence alone (for otherwise it could not possess it) a power to affect us. I confess, with me the conviction is absolute that, if the impression and sense of death were not thus counterbalanced, such a hollowiness would pervade the whole system of things, such a want of correspondence and consistency, a disproportion so astounding betwixt means and ends, that there could be no repose, no joy. Were we to grow up unfostered by this genial warmth, a frost would chill the spirit, so penetrating and powerful that there could be no motions of the life of love; and infinitely less could we have any wish to be remembered after we had passed away from a world in which each man had moved about like a shadow. — If, then, in a creature endowed with the faculties of foresight and reason, the social affections could not have unfolded themselves uncountenanced by the faith that

Man is an immortal being, and if, consequently, neither could the individual dying have had a desire to survive in the remembrance of his fellows, nor on their side could they have felt a wish to preserve for future times vestiges of the departed; it follows, as a final inference, that without the belief in immortality, wherein these several desires originate, neither monuments nor epitaphs, in affectionate or laudatory commemoration of the deceased, could have existed in the world.

Simonides, it is related, upon landing in a strange country, found the corse of an unknown person lying by the seaside; he buried it, and was honoured throughout Greece for the plety of that act. Another ancient Philosopher, chancing to fix his eyes upon a dead body, regarded the same with slight, if not with contempt, saying, "See the shell of the flown bird!" But it is not to be supposed that the moral and tender-hearted Simonides was incapable of the lofty movements of thought to which that other Sage gave way at the moment while his soul was intent only upon the indestructible being; nor, on the other hand, that he, in whose sight a lifeless human body was of no more value than the worthless shell from which the living fowl had departed, would not, in a different mood of mind, have been affected by those earthly considerations which had incited the philosophic Poet to the performance of that pious duty. And with regard to this latter we may be assured that, if he had been destitute of the capability of communing with the more exalted thoughts that appertain to human nature, he would have cared no more for the corse of the stranger than for the dead body of a seal or porpoise which might have been cast up by the waves. We respect the corporeal frame of Man, not merely because it is the habitation of a rational, but of an immortal Soul. Each of these Sages was in sympathy with the best feelings of our nature; feelings which, though they seem opposite to each other, have another and a finer connection than that of contrast.—It is a connection formed through the subtle progress by which, both in the natural and the moral world, qualities pass insensibly into their contraries, and things revolve upon each other. As,

in sailing upon the orb of this planet, a voyage towards the regions where the sun sets conducts gradually to the quarter where we have been accustomed to behold it come forth at its rising; and, in like manner, a voyage towards the east, the birth-place in our imagination of the morning, leads finally to the quarter where the sun is last seen when he departs from our eyes; so the contemplative Soul, travelling in the direction of mortality, advances to the country of everlasting life; and, in like manner, may she continue to explore those cheerful tracts till she is brought back, for her advantage and benefit, to the land of transitory things—of sorrow and of tears.

On a midway point, therefore, which commands the thoughts and feelings of the two Sages whom we have represented in contrast, does the Author of that species of composition, the laws of which it is our present purpose to explain, take his stand. Accordingly, recurring to the twofold desire of guarding the remains of the deceased and preserving their memory, it may be said that a sepulchral monument is a tribute to a man as a human being; and that an epitaph (in the ordinary meaning attached to the word) includes this general feeling and something more; and is a record to preserve the memory of the dead, as a tribute due to his individual worth, for a satisfaction to the sorrowing hearts of the survivors, and for the common benefit of the living: which record is to be accomplished, not in a general manner, but, where it can, in *close connection with the bodily remains of the deceased*: and these, it may be added, among the modern nations of Europe, are deposited within, or contiguous to, their places of worship. In ancient times, as is well known, it was the custom to bury the dead beyond the walls of towns and cities; and among the Greeks and Romans they were frequently interred by the waysides.

I could here pause with pleasure, and invite the Reader to indulge with me in contemplation of the advantages which must have attended such a practice. We might ruminate upon the beauty which the monuments, thus placed, must have borrowed from the surrounding images of nature—from the trees, the wild flowers,

from a stream running perhaps within sight or hearing, from the beaten road stretching its weary length hard by. Many tender similitudes must these objects have presented to the mind of the traveller leaning upon one of the tombs, or reposing in the coolness of its shade, whether he had halted from weariness or in compliance with the invitation, "Pause, Traveller!" so often found upon the monuments. And to its epitaph also must have been supplied strong appeals to visible appearances or immediate impressions, lively and affecting analogies of life as a journey—death as a sleep overcoming the tired wayfarer—of misfortune as a storm that falls suddenly upon him—of beauty as a flower that passeth away, or of innocent pleasure as one that may be gathered—of virtue that standeth firm as a rock against the beating waves—of hope "undermined insensibly like the poplar by the side of the river that has fed it," or blasted in a moment like a pine-tree by the stroke of lightning upon the mountain-top—of admonitions and heart-stirring remembrances, like a refreshing breeze that comes without warning, or the taste of the waters of an unexpected fountain. These and similar suggestions must have given, formerly, to the language of the senseless stone a voice enforced and endeared by the benignity of that nature with which it was in unison.—We, in modern times, have lost much of these advantages; and they are but in a small degree counterbalanced to the inhabitants of large towns and cities by the custom of depositing the dead within, or contiguous to, their places of worship; however splendid or imposing may be the appearance of those edifices, or however interesting or salutary the recollections associated with them. Even were it not true that tombs lose their monitory virtue when thus obtruded upon the notice of men occupied with the cares of the world, and too often sullied and defiled by those cares, yet still, when death is in our thoughts, nothing can make amends for the want of the soothing influences of nature, and for the absence of those types of renovation and decay which the fields and woods offer to the notice of the serious and contemplative mind. To feel the force of this sentiment, let a man only compare in ima-

gination the unsightly manner in which our monuments are crowded together in the busy, noisy, unclean, and almost grassless churchyard of a large town, with the still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery, in some remote place, and yet further sanctified by the grove of cypress in which it is embosomed. Thoughts in the same temper as these have already been expressed with true sensibility by an ingenuous Poet of the present day. The subject of his poem is "All Saints Church, Derby:" he has been deploring the forbidding and unseemly appearance of its burial-ground, and uttering a wish that in past times the practice had been adopted of interring the inhabitants of large towns in the country;—

Then in some rural, calm, sequestered spot  
Where healing Nature her benignant look  
Ne'er changes, save at that lorn season, when  
With tresses drooping o'er her sable stole,  
She yearly mourns the mortal doom of man,  
Her noblest work, (so Israel's virgins erst,  
With annual moan upon the mountains wept  
Their fairest gone,) there in that rural scene,  
So placid, so congenial to the wish  
The Christian feels, of peaceful rest within  
The silent grave, I would have stayed:

—wandered forth, where the cold dew of heaven  
Lay on the humbler graves around, what time  
The pale moon gazed upon the turfy mounds,  
Pensive, as though like me, in lonely muse,  
"Twere brooding on the dead inhumed beneath.  
There while with him, the holy man of Uz,  
O'er human destiny I sympathised,  
Counting the long, long periods prophecy  
Decrees to roll, ere the great day arrives  
Of resurrection, oft the blue-eyed Spring  
Had met me with her blossoms, as the Dove,  
Of old, returned with olive leaf, to cheer  
The Patriarch mourning o'er a world destroyed:  
And I would bless her visit; for to me  
'Tis sweet to trace the consonance that links  
As one, the works of Nature and the word  
Of God.—  
JOHN EDWARDS.

A village churchyard, lying as it does in the lap of nature, may indeed be most favourably contrasted with that of a town of crowded population; and sepulture therein combines many of the best tendencies which belong to the mode practised by the Ancients with others peculiar to itself. The sensations of pious cheerfulness, which attend the celebration of the

sabbath-day in rural places, are profitably chastised by the sight of the graves of kindred and friends, gathered together in that general home towards which the thoughtful yet happy spectators themselves are journeying. Hence a parish church, in the stillness of the country, is a visible centre of a community of the living and the dead; a point to which are habitually referred the nearest concerns of both.

As, then, both in cities and in villages, the dead are deposited in close connection with our places of worship, with us the composition of an epitaph naturally turns, still more than among the nations of antiquity, upon the most serious and solemn affections of the human mind; upon departed worth—upon personal or social sorrow and admiration—upon religion, individual and social—upon time, and upon eternity. Accordingly, it suffices, in ordinary cases, to secure a composition of this kind from censure, that it contain nothing that shall shock or be inconsistent with this spirit. But, to entitle an epitaph to praise, more than this is necessary. It ought to contain some thought or feeling belonging to the mortal or immortal part of our nature touchingly expressed; and if that be done, however general or even trite the sentiment may be, every man of pure mind will read the words with pleasure and gratitude. A husband bewails a wife; a parent breathes a sigh of disappointed hope over a lost child; a son utters a sentiment of filial reverence for a departed father or mother; a friend perhaps inscribes an encomium recording the companionable qualities, or the solid virtues, of the tenant of the grave, whose departure has left a sadness upon his memory. This and a pious admonition to the living, and a humble expression of Christian confidence in immortality, is the language of a thousand churchyards; and it does not often happen that anything, in a greater degree discriminate or appropriate to the dead or to the living, is to be found in them. This want of discrimination has been ascribed by Dr. Johnson, in his Essay upon the epitaphs of Pope, to two causes: first, the scantiness of the objects of human praise; and, secondly, the want of variety in the characters of men; or, to use his own

words, "to the fact, that the greater part of mankind have no character at all." Such language may be holden without blame among the generalities of common conversation; but does not become a critic and a moralist speaking seriously upon a serious subject. The objects of admiration in human nature are not scanty, but abundant; and every man has a character of his own to the eye that has skill to perceive it. The real cause of the acknowledged want of discrimination in sepulchral memorials is this: That to analyse the characters of others, especially of those whom we love, is not a common or natural employment of men at any time. We are not anxious unerringly to understand the constitution of the minds of those who have soothed, who have cheered, who have supported us; with whom we have been long and daily pleased or delighted. The affections are their own justification. The light of love in our hearts is a satisfactory evidence that there is a body of worth in the minds of our friends or kindred, whence that light has proceeded. We shrink from the thought of placing their merits and defects to be weighed against each other in the nice balance of pure intellect; nor do we find much temptation to detect the shades by which a good quality or virtue is discriminated in them from an excellence known by the same general name as it exists in the mind of another; and least of all do we incline to these refinements when under the pressure of sorrow, admiration, or regret, or when actuated by any of those feelings which incite men to prolong the memory of their friends and kindred by records placed in the bosom of the all-uniting and equalising receptacle of the dead.

The first requisite, then, in an Epitaph is, that it should speak, in a tone which shall sink into the heart, the general language of humanity as connected with the subject of death—the source from which an epitaph proceeds—of death, and of life. To be born and to die are the two points in which all men feel themselves to be in absolute coincidence. This general language may be uttered so strikingly as to entitle an epitaph to high praise; yet it cannot lay claim to the highest unless

other excellences be superadded. Passing through all intermediate steps, we will attempt to determine at once what these excellences are, and wherein consists the perfection of this species of composition.—It will be found to lie in a due proportion of the common or universal feeling of humanity to sensations excited by a distinct and clear conception, conveyed to the reader's mind, of the individual whose death is deplored and whose memory is to be preserved; at least of his character as, after death, it appeared to those who loved him and lament his loss. The general sympathy ought to be quickened, provoked, and diversified, by particular thoughts, actions, images,—circumstances of age, occupation, manner of life, prosperity which the deceased had known, or adversity to which he had been subject; and these ought to be bound together and solemnised into one harmony by the general sympathy. The two powers should temper, restrain, and exalt each other. The reader ought to know who and what the man was whom he is called upon to think of with interest. A distinct conception should be given (implicitly where it can, rather than explicitly) of the individual lamented.—But the writer of an epitaph is not an anatomist, who dissects the internal frame of the mind; he is not even a painter, who executes a portrait at leisure and in entire tranquillity: his delineation, we must remember, is performed by the side of the grave; and, what is more, the grave of one whom he loves and admires. What purity and brightness is that virtue clothed in, the image of which must no longer bless our living eyes! The character of a deceased friend or beloved kinsman is not seen—no, nor ought to be seen—otherwise than as a tree through a tender haze or a luminous mist, that spiritualises and beautifies it; that takes away, indeed, but only to the end that the parts which are not abstracted may appear more dignified and lovely; may impress and affect the more. Shall we say, then, that this is not truth, not a faithful image; and that, accordingly, the purposes of commemoration cannot be answered?—It is truth, and of the highest order; for, though doubtless things are not apparent which did exist;

yet, the object being looked at through this medium, parts and proportions are brought into distinct view which before had been only imperfectly or unconsciously seen: it is truth hallowed by love—the joint offspring of the worth of the dead and the affections of the living! This may easily be brought to the test. Let one, whose eyes have been sharpened by personal hostility to discover what was amiss in the character of a good man, hear the tidings of his death, and what a change is wrought in a moment! Enmity melts away; and, as it disappears, unsightliness, disproportion, and deformity, vanish; and, through the influence of commiseration, a harmony of love and beauty succeeds. Bring such a man to the tombstone on which shall be inscribed an epitaph on his adversary, composed in the spirit which we have recommended. Would he turn from it as from an idle tale? No;—the thoughtful look, the sigh, and perhaps the involuntary tear, would testify that it had a sane, a generous, and good meaning; and that on the writer's mind had remained an impression which was a true abstract of the character of the deceased; that his gifts and graces were remembered in the simplicity in which they ought to be remembered. The composition and quality of the mind of a virtuous man, contemplated by the side of the grave where his body is mouldering, ought to appear, and be felt as something midway between what he was on earth walking about with his living frailties, and what he may be presumed to be as a Spirit in heaven.

It suffices, therefore, that the trunk and the main branches of the worth of the deceased be boldly and unaffectedly represented. Any further detail, minutely and scrupulously pursued, especially if this be done with laborious and antithetic discriminations, must inevitably frustrate its own purpose; forcing the passing Spectator to this conclusion,—either that the dead did not possess the merits ascribed to him, or that they who have raised a monument to his memory, and must therefore be supposed to have been closely connected with him, were incapable of perceiving those merits; or at least during the act of composition had lost sight of them; for,

the understanding having been so busy in its petty occupation, how could the heart of the mourner be other than cold? and in either of these cases, whether the fault be on the part of the buried person or the survivors, the memorial is unaffecting and profitless.

Much better is it to fall short in discrimination than to pursue it too far, or to labour it unfeelingly. For in no place are we so much disposed to dwell upon those points of nature and condition wherein all men resemble each other, as in the temple where the universal Father is worshipped, or by the side of the grave which gathers all human Beings to itself, and "equalises the lofty and the low." We suffer and we weep with the same heart; we love and are anxious for one another in one spirit; our hopes look to the same quarter; and the virtues by which we are all to be furthered and supported, as patience, meekness, good-will, justice, temperance, and temperate desires, are in an equal degree the concern of us all. Let an Epitaph, then, contain at least these acknowledgments to our common nature; nor let the sense of their importance be sacrificed to a balance of opposite qualities or minute distinctions in individual character; which if they do not (as will for the most part be the case), when examined, resolve themselves into a trick of words, will, even when they are true and just, for the most part be grievously out of place; for, as it is probable that few only have explored these intricacies of human nature, so can the tracing of them be interesting only to a few. But an epitaph is not a proud writing shut up for the studious: it is exposed to all—to the wise and the most ignorant; it is condescending, perspicuous, and lovingly solicits regard; its story and admonitions are brief, that the thoughtless, the busy, and indolent, may not be deterred, nor the impatient tired: the stooping old man cons the engraven record like a second horn-book;—the child is proud that he can read it;—and the stranger is introduced through its mediation to the company of a friend: it is concerning all, and for all:—in the churchyard it is open to the day; the sun looks down upon the stone, and the rains of heaven beat against it.

Yet, though the writer who would excite sympathy is bound in this case, more than in any other, to give proof that he himself has been moved, it is to be remembered that to raise a monument is a sober and a reflective act; that the inscription which it bears is intended to be permanent, and for universal perusal; and that, for this reason, the thoughts and feelings expressed should be permanent also—liberated from that weakness and anguish of sorrow which is in nature transitory, and which with instinctive decency retires from notice. The passions should be subdued, the emotions controlled; strong, indeed, but nothing ungovernable or wholly involuntary. Seemliness requires this, and truth requires it also: for how can the narrator otherwise be trusted? Moreover, a grave is a tranquillising object: resignation in course of time springs up from it as naturally as the wild flowers, besprinkling the turf with which it may be covered, or gathering round the monument by which it is defended. The very form and substance of the monument which has received the inscription, and the appearance of the letters, testifying with what a slow and laborious hand they must have been engraven, might seem to reproach the author who had given way upon this occasion to transports of mind, or to quick turns of conflicting passion; though the same might constitute the life and beauty of a funeral oration or elegiac poem.

These sensations and judgments, acted upon perhaps unconsciously, have been one of the main causes why epitaphs so often personate the deceased, and represent him as speaking from his own tomb-stone. The departed Mortal is introduced telling you himself that his pains are gone; that a state of rest is come; and he conjures you to weep for him no longer. He admonishes with the voice of one experienced in the vanity of those affections which are confined to earthly objects, and gives a verdict like a superior Being, performing the office of a judge, who has no temptations to mislead him, and whose decision cannot but be dispassionate. Thus is death disarmed of its sting, and affliction unsubstantialised. By this tender fiction, the survivors bind themselves to a sedate sorrow, and employ the intervention of the imagination

in order that the reason may speak her own language earlier than she would otherwise have been enabled to do. This shadowy interposition also harmoniously unites the two worlds of the living and the dead by their appropriate affections. And it may be observed that here we have an additional proof of the propriety with which sepulchral inscriptions were referred to the consciousness of immortality as their primal source.

I do not speak with a wish to recommend that an epitaph should be cast in this mould preferably to the still more common one, in which what is said comes from the survivors directly; but rather to point out how natural those feelings are which have induced men, in all states and ranks of society, so frequently to adopt this mode. And this I have done chiefly in order that the laws which ought to govern the composition of the other may be better understood. This latter mode, namely, that in which the survivors speak in their own persons, seems to me upon the whole greatly preferable, as it admits a wider range of notices; and, above all, because, excluding the fiction which is the groundwork of the other, it rests upon a more solid basis.

Enough has been said to convey our notion of a perfect epitaph; but it must be borne in mind that one is meant which will best answer the *general* ends of that species of composition. According to the course pointed out, the worth of private life, through all varieties of situation and character, will be most honourably and profitably preserved in memory. Nor would the model recommended less suit public men in all instances, save of those persons who by the greatness of their services in the employments of peace or war, or by the surpassing excellence of their works in art, literature, or science, have made themselves not only universally known, but have filled the heart of their country with everlasting gratitude. Yet I must here pause to correct myself. In describing the general tenor of thought which epitaphs ought to hold, I have omitted to say, that if it be the *actions* of a man, or even some *one* conspicuous or beneficial act of local or general utility, which have distinguished him, and excited a desire that he should be

remembered, then, of course, ought the attention to be directed chiefly to those actions or that act: and such sentiments dwelt upon as naturally arise out of them or it. Having made this necessary distinction, I proceed.—The mighty benefactors of mankind, as they are not only known by the immediate survivors, but will continue to be known familiarly to latest posterity, do not stand in need of biographic sketches in such a place; nor of delineations of character to individualise them. This is already done by their Works, in the memories of men. Their naked names, and a grand comprehensive sentiment of civic gratitude, patriotic love, or human admiration—or the utterance of some elementary principle most essential in the constitution of true virtue—or a declaration touching that pious humility and self-abasement, which are ever most profound as minds are most susceptible of genuine exaltation—or an intuition, communicated in adequate words, of the sublimity of intellectual power;—these are the only tribute which can here be paid—the only offering that upon such an altar would not be unworthy.

"What needs my Shakspeare for his honoured bones

The labour of an age in piled stones,  
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid  
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?

Dear Son of Memory, great Heir of Fame,  
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?

Thou in our wonder and astonishment  
Hast built thyself a livelong monument,  
And so sepulchred, in such pomp dost lie,  
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die."

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*'And spires whose "silent finger points to heaven."*

An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeple, which, as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with silent finger to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich though rainy sunset, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heavenward. See "The Friend," by S. T. Coleridge, No. 14, p. 223.

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*'That sycamore, which annually holds  
Within its shade, as in a stately tent.'*

*"This Sycamore oft musical with Bees;  
Such Tents the Patriarchs loved."*

*S. T. Coleridge.*

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*'Perish the roses and the flowers of kings.'*

The "Transit gloria mundi" is finely expressed in the Introduction to the Foundation-charters of some of the ancient Abbeys. Some expressions here used are taken from that of the Abbey of St. Mary's, Furness, the translation of which is as follows:—

"Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that the roses and flowers of Kings, Emperors, and Dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great, wither and decay; and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death: I therefore," etc.

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——— *'Earth has lent  
Her waters, Air her breezes.'*

In treating this subject, it was impossible not to recollect with gratitude the pleasing picture which, in his Poem of the Fleece, the excellent and amiable Dyer has given of the influences of manufacturing industry upon the face of this Island. He wrote at a time when machinery was first beginning to be introduced, and his benevolent heart prompted him to augur from it nothing but good. Truth has compelled me to dwell upon the baneful effects arising out of an ill-regulated and excessive application of powers so admirable in themselves.

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*'Binding herself by statute.'*

The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; and it is impossible to overrate the benefit which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government.

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*'Dion.'*

This poem began with the following stanza, which has been displaced on account of its detaining the reader too long from the subject, and as rather precluding, than preparing for, the due effect of the allusion to the genius of Plato:—

Fair is the Swan, whose majesty, prevailing  
O'er breezeless water, on Locarno's lake,  
Bears him on while proudly sailing  
He leaves behind a moon-illuminated wake:  
Behold! the mantling spirit of reserve  
Fashions his neck into a goodly curve;  
An arch thrown back between luxuriant wings  
Of whitest garniture, like fir-tree boughs  
To which, on some unruffled morning, clings  
A flaky weight of winter's purest snows!  
—Behold!—as with a gushing impulse heaves  
That downy prow, and softly cleaves  
The mirror of the crystal flood,  
Vanish inverted hill, and shadowy wood,  
And pendent rocks, where'er, in gliding state,  
Winds the mute Creature without visible Mate  
Or Rival, save the Queen of night  
Showering down a silver light,  
From heaven, upon her chosen Favourite!

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*'Thanksgiving Ode.'*

Wholly unworthy of touching upon the momentous subject here treated would that Poet be, before whose eyes the present distresses under which this kingdom labours could interpose a veil sufficiently thick to hide, or even to obscure, the splendour of this great moral triumph. If I have given way to exultation, unchecked by these distresses, it might be sufficient to protect me from a charge of insensibility, should I state my own belief that the sufferings will be transitory. Upon the wisdom of a very large majority of the British nation rested that generosity which poured out the treasures of this country for the deliverance of Europe: and in the same national wisdom, presiding in time of peace over an energy not inferior to that which has been displayed in war, *they* confide, who encourage a firm hope that the cup of our wealth will be gradually replenished. There will, doubtless, be no few ready to indulge in regrets and repinings; and to feed a morbid satis-



faction, by aggravating these burthens in imagination; in order that calamity so confidently prophesied, as it has not taken the shape which their sagacity allotted to it, may appear as grievous as possible under another. But the body of the nation will not quarrel with the gain, because it might have been purchased at a less price; and, acknowledging in these sufferings, which they feel to have been in a great degree unavoidable, a consecration of their noble efforts, they will vigorously apply themselves to remedy the evil.

Nor is it at the expense of rational patriotism, or in disregard of sound philosophy, that I have given vent to feelings tending to encourage a martial spirit in the bosoms of my countrymen, at a time when there is a general outcry against the prevalence of these dispositions. The British army, both by its skill and valour in the field, and by the discipline which rendered it, to the inhabitants of the several countries where its operations were carried on, a protection from the violence of their own troops, has performed services that will not allow the language of gratitude and admiration to be suppressed or restrained (whatsoever be the temper of the public mind) through a scrupulous dread lest the tribute due to the past should prove an injurious incentive for the future. Every man deserving the name of Briton adds his voice to the chorus which extols the exploits of his countrymen, with a consciousness, at times overpowering the effort, that they transcend all praise.—But this particular sentiment, thus irresistibly excited, is not sufficient. The nation would err grievously if she suffered the abuse which other states have made of military power to prevent her from perceiving that no people ever was or can be independent, free, or secure, much less great, in any sane application of the word, without a cultivation of military virtues. Nor let it be overlooked that the benefits derivable from these sources are placed within the reach of Great Britain, under conditions peculiarly favourable. The same insular position which, by rendering territorial incorporation impossible, utterly precludes the desire of conquest under the most seductive shape it can assume, enables her to rely, for her defence against foreign

foes, chiefly upon a species of armed force from which her own liberties have nothing to fear. Such are the privileges of her situation; and, by permitting, they invite her to give way to the courageous instincts of human nature, and to strengthen and refine them by culture.

But some have more than insinuated that a design exists to subvert the civil character of the English people by unconstitutional applications and unnecessary increase of military power. The advisers and abettors of such a design, were it possible that it should exist, would be guilty of the most heinous crime, which, upon this planet, can be committed. Trusting that this apprehension arises from the delusive influences of an honourable jealousy, let me hope that the martial qualities which I venerate will be fostered by adhering to those good old usages which experience has sanctioned, and by availing ourselves of new means of indisputable promise: particularly by applying, in its utmost possible extent, that system of tuition whose master-spring is a habit of gradually enlightened subordination;—by imparting knowledge, civil, moral, and religious, in such measure that the mind, among all classes of the community, may love, admire, and be prepared and accomplished to defend, that country under whose protection its faculties have been unfolded and its riches acquired;—by just dealing towards all orders of the state, so that, no members of it being trampled upon, courage may everywhere continue to rest immovably upon its ancient English foundation, personal self-respect;—by adequate rewards and permanent honours conferred upon the deserving;—by encouraging athletic exercises and manly sports among the peasantry of the country;—and by especial care to provide and support institutions in which, during a time of peace, a reasonable proportion of the youth of the country may be instructed in military science.

I have only to add that I should feel little satisfaction in giving to the world these limited attempts to celebrate the virtues of my country, if I did not encourage a hope that a subject, which it has fallen within my province to treat only in the mass, will by other poets be illustrated in

that detail which its importance calls for, and which will allow opportunities to give the merited applause to PERSONS as well as to THINGS.

The ode was published along with other pieces, now interspersed through this volume.

Page 548

"Discipline the rule whereof is passion."  
LORD BROOKE.

Page 556

The event is thus recorded in the journals of the day:—"When the Austrians took Hockheim, in one part of the engagement they got to the brow of the hill, whence they had their first view of the Rhine. They instantly halted—not a gun was fired—not a voice heard: they stood gazing on the river with those feelings which the events of the last fifteen years at once called up. Prince Schwartzenberg rode up to know the cause of this sudden stop; they then gave three cheers, rushed after the enemy, and drove them into the water."

Page 572

'Wings at my shoulders seem to play.'

In these lines I am under obligation to the exquisite picture of "Jacob's Dream," by Mr. Alstone, now in America. It is pleasant to make this public acknowledgment to a man of genius, whom I have the honour to rank among my friends.

Page 581

If in this Sonnet I should seem to have borne a little too hard upon the personal appearance of the worthy Poissards of Calais, let me take shelter under the authority of my lamented friend, the late Sir George Beaumont. He, a most accurate observer, used to say of them, that their features and countenances seemed to have conformed to those of the creatures they dealt in; at all events the resemblance was striking.

Page 581

'Brugès.'

This is not the first poetical tribute which in our times has been paid to this beautiful

city. Mr. Southey, in the "Poet's Pilgrimage," speaks of it in lines which I cannot deny myself the pleasure of connecting with my own.

"Time hath not wronged her, nor hath ruin sought

Rudely her splendid structures to destroy,  
Save in those recent days, with evil fraught,

When mutability, in drunken joy  
Triumphant, and from all restraint released,  
Let loose her fierce and many-headed beast.

But for the scars in that unhappy rage

Inflicted, firm she stands and undecayed;  
Like our first Sires, a beautiful old age

Is hers in venerable years arrayed;  
And yet, to her, benignant stars may bring,  
What fate denies to man,—a second spring.

When I may read of tilts in days of old,

And tourneys graced by Chieftains of renown,  
Fair dames, grave citizens, and warriors bold,

If fancy would pourtray some stately town,  
Which for such pomp fit theatre should be,  
Fair Brugès, I shall then remember thee."

In this city are many vestiges of the splendour of the Burgundian Dukedom, and the long black mantle universally worn by the females is probably a remnant of the old Spanish connection, which, if I do not much deceive myself, is traceable in the grave deportment of its inhabitants. Brugès is comparatively little disturbed by that curious contest, or rather conflict, of Flemish with French propensities in matters of taste, so conspicuous through other parts of Flanders. The hotel to which we drove at Ghent furnished an odd instance. In the passages were paintings and statues, after the antique, of Hebe and Apollo; and in the garden a little pond, about a yard and a half in diameter, with a weeping willow bending over it, and under the shade of that tree, in the centre of the pond, a wooden painted statue of a Dutch or Flemish boor, looking ineffably tender upon his mistress, and embracing her. A living duck, tethered at the feet of the sculptured lovers, alternately tormented a miserable eel and itself with endeavours to escape from its bonds and prison. Had we chanced to espy the hostess of the hotel in this quaint rural retreat, the exhibition would have been complete. She was a true Flemish figure, in the dress of the days of Holbein; her

symbol of office, a weighty bunch of keys, pendent from her portly waist. In Brussels the modern taste in costume, architecture, etc., has got the mastery; in Ghent there is a struggle: but in Bruges old images are still paramount, and an air of monastic life among the quiet goings-on of a thinly-peopled city is inexpressibly soothing; a pensive grace seems to be cast over all, even the very children.—*Extract from Journal.*

## Page 582

*'Where unremitting frosts the rocky  
crescent bleach.'*

"Let a wall of rocks be imagined from three to six hundred feet in height, and rising between France and Spain, so as physically to separate the two kingdoms—let us fancy this wall curved like a crescent, with its convexity towards France. Lastly, let us suppose, that in the very middle of the wall, a breach of 300 feet wide has been beaten down by the famous *Roland*, and we may have a good idea of what the mountaineers call the '*BRECHE DE ROLAND*.'"—*Raymond's Pyrenees.*

## Page 583

*'Miserere Domine.'*

See the beautiful Song in Mr. Coleridge's Tragedy, "*THE REMORSE*." Why is the harp of Quantock silent?

## Page 583

*'Not, like his great Compeers, indignantly  
Doth Danube spring to life!'*

Before this quarter of the Black Forest was inhabited, the source of the Danube might have suggested some of those sublime images which Armstrong has so finely described; at present, the contrast is most striking. The Spring appears in a capacious stone Basin in front of a Ducal palace, with a pleasure-ground opposite; then, passing under the pavement, takes the form of a little, clear, bright, black, vigorous rill, barely wide enough to tempt the agility of a child five years old to leap over it,—and entering the garden, it joins, after a course of a few hundred yards, a stream much more considerable than itself. The *copiousness* of

the spring at *Doneschingen* must have procured for it the honour of being named the Source of the Danube.

## Page 584

"The Staub-bach" is a narrow Stream, which, after a long course on the heights, comes to the sharp edge of a somewhat overhanging precipice, overleaps it with a bound, and, after a fall of 930 feet, forms again a rivulet. The vocal powers of these musical Beggars may seem to be exaggerated; but this wild and savage air was utterly unlike any sounds I had ever heard; the notes reached me from a distance, and on what occasion they were sung I could not guess, only they seemed to belong, in some way or other, to the Waterfall—and reminded me of religious services chanted to Streams and Fountains in Pagan times. Mr. Southey has thus accurately characterised the peculiarity of this music: "While we were at the Waterfall, some half-score peasants, chiefly women and girls, assembled just out of reach of the Spring, and set up—surely, the wildest chorus that ever was heard by human ears,—a song not of articulate sounds, but in which the voice was used as a mere instrument of music, more flexible than any which art could produce,—sweet, powerful, and thrilling beyond description."—See Notes to "*A Tale of Paraguay*."

## Page 585

*'Engelberg.'*

The Convent whose site was pointed out, according to tradition, in this manner, is seated at its base. The architecture of the building is unimpressive, but the situation is worthy of the honour which the imagination of the mountaineers has conferred upon it.

## Page 589

*'Though searching damps and many an  
envious flaw  
Have marred this Work.'*

This picture of the Last Supper has not only been grievously injured by time, but the greatest part of it, if not the whole, is said to have been retouched, or painted over again. These niceties may be left to

connoisseurs.—I speak of it as I felt. The copy exhibited in London some years ago, and the engraving by Merghen, are both admirable; but in the original is a power which neither of those works has attained, or even approached.

#### Page 590

*'Of Figures human and divine.'*

The statues ranged round the spire and along the roof of the Cathedral of Milan have been found fault with by persons whose exclusive taste is unfortunate for themselves. It is true that the same expense and labour, judiciously directed to purposes more strictly architectural, might have much heightened the general effect of the building; for, seen from the ground, the Statues appear diminutive. But the *coup-d'œil*, from the best point of view, which is half way up the spire, must strike an unprejudiced person with admiration; and surely the selection and arrangement of the Figures is exquisitely fitted to support the religion of the country in the imaginations and feelings of the spectator. It was with great pleasure that I saw, during the two ascents which we made, several children, of different ages, tripping up and down the slender spire, and pausing to look around them, with feelings much more animated than could have been derived from these or the finest works of art, if placed within easy reach.—Remember also that you have the Alps on one side, and on the other the Apennines, with the plain of Lombardy between!

#### Page 593

*'Still, with those white-robed Shapes—a living Stream,  
The glacier Pillars join in solemn guise.'*

This Procession is a part of the sacramental service performed once a month. In the valley of Engelberg we had the good fortune to be present at the *Grand Festival* of the Virgin—but the Procession on that day, though consisting of upwards of 1000 persons, assembled from all the branches of the sequestered valley, was much less striking (notwithstanding the sublimity of the surrounding scenery): it wanted both the simplicity of the other

and the accompaniment of the Glacier-columns, whose sisterly resemblance to the *moving* Figures gave it a most beautiful and solemn peculiarity.

#### Page 595

Near the town of Boulogne, and overhanging the beach, are the remains of a tower which bears the name of Caligula, who here terminated his western expedition, of which these sea-shells were the boasted spoils. And at no great distance from these ruins, Buonaparte, standing upon a mound of earth, harangued his "Army of England," reminding them of the exploits of Caesar, and pointing towards the white cliffs, upon which their standards *were to float*. He recommended also a subscription to be raised among the Soldiery to erect on that ground, in memory of the foundation of the "Legion of Honour," a Column—which was not completed at the time we were there.

#### Page 596

*'We mark majestic herds of cattle, free  
To ruminate.'*

This is a most grateful sight for an Englishman returning to his native land. Everywhere one misses in the cultivated grounds abroad, the animated and soothing accompaniment of animals ranging and selecting their own food at will.

#### Page 597

*'Far as St. Maurice, from yon eastern  
Forks.'*

LES FOURCHES, the point at which the two chains of mountains part, that inclose the Valais, which terminates at ST. MAURICE.

#### Page 597

*'ye that occupy  
Your council-seats beneath the open sky,  
On Sarnen's Mount.'*

Sarnen, one of the two capitals of the Canton of Underwalden; the spot here alluded to is close to the town, and is called the Landenberg, from the tyrant of that name, whose château formerly stood there. On the 1st of January 1308, the great day which the confederated Heroes had chosen for the deliverance of their

country, all the castles of the Governors were taken by force or stratagem; and the Tyrants themselves conducted, with their creatures, to the frontiers, after having witnessed the destruction of their strongholds. From that time the Landenberg has been the place where the Legislators of this division of the Canton assemble. The site, which is well described by Ebel, is one of the most beautiful in Switzerland.

Page 597

*'Calls me to pace her honoured Bridge—'*

The bridges of Lucerne are roofed, and open at the sides, so that the passenger has, at the same time, the benefit of shade, and a view of the magnificent country. The pictures are attached to the rafters; those from Scripture History, on the Cathedral-bridge, amount, according to my notes, to 240. Subjects from the Old Testament face the passenger as he goes towards the Cathedral, and those from the New as he returns. The pictures on these bridges, as well as those in most other parts of Switzerland, are not to be spoken of as works of art; but they are instruments admirably answering the purpose for which they were designed.

Page 597

*'The River Duddon.'*

A Poet, whose works are not yet known as they deserve to be, thus enters upon his description of the "Ruins of Rome:"

"The rising Sun  
Flames on the ruins in the purer air  
Towering aloft;"

and ends thus—

"The setting Sun displays  
His visible great round, between yon towers,  
As through two shady cliffs."

Mr. Crowe, in his excellent loco-descriptive Poem, "Lewesdon Hill," is still more expeditious, finishing the whole on a May-morning, before breakfast.

"To-morrow for severer thought, but now  
To breakfast, and keep festival to-day."

No one believes, or is desired to believe, that those Poems were actually composed

within such limits of time; nor was there any reason why a prose statement should acquaint the reader with the plain fact, to the disturbance of poetic credibility. But, in the present case, I am compelled to mention, that the above series of Sonnets was the growth of many years;—the one which stands the 14th was the first produced; and others were added upon occasional visits to the Stream, or as recollections of the scenes upon its banks awakened a wish to describe them. In this manner I had proceeded insensibly, without perceiving that I was trespassing upon ground pre-occupied, at least as far as intention went, by Mr. Coleridge; who, more than twenty years ago, used to speak of writing a rural Poem, to be entitled "The Brook," of which he has given a sketch in a recent publication. But a particular subject cannot, I think, much interfere with a general one; and I have been further kept from encroaching upon any right Mr. C. may still wish to exercise, by the restriction which the frame of the Sonnet imposed upon me, narrowing unavoidably the range of thought, and precluding, though not without its advantages, many graces to which a freer movement of verse would naturally have led.

May I not venture, then, to hope, that, instead of being a hindrance by anticipation of any part of the subject, these Sonnets may remind Mr. Coleridge of his own more comprehensive design, and induce him to fulfil it?—There is a sympathy in streams,—“one calleth to another;” and I would gladly believe, that “The Brook” will, ere long, murmur in concert with “The Duddon.” But, asking pardon for this fancy, I need not scruple to say that those verses must indeed be ill-fated which can enter upon such pleasant walks of nature without receiving and giving inspiration. The power of waters over the minds of Poets has been acknowledged from the earliest ages;—through the “*Flumina amem sylvasque inglorius*” of Virgil, down to the sublime apostrophe to the great rivers of the earth by Armstrong, and the simple ejaculation of Burns (chosen, if I recollect right, by Mr. Coleridge, as a motto for his embryo “Brook”),

"The Muse nae Poet ever fand her,  
Till by himsel' he learned to wander,  
Adown some trotting burn's meander,  
AND NA' THINK LANG."

Page 600

*'There bloomed the strawberry of the  
wilderness,  
The trembling cyebright showed her sapph-  
ire blue.'*

These two lines are in a great measure taken from "The Beauties of Spring, a Juvenile Poem," by the Rev. Joseph Symson. He was a native of Cumberland, and was educated in the vale of Grasmere, and at Hawkshead school: his poems are little known, but they contain passages of splendid description; and the versification of his "Vision of Alfred" is harmonious and animated. In describing the motions of the Sylphs that constitute the strange machinery of his Poem, he uses the following illustrative simile:—

— "Glancing from their plumes  
A changeful light the azure vault illumens,  
Less varying hues beneath the Pole adorn  
The streamy glories of the Boreal morn,  
That wavering to and fro their radiance shed  
On Bothnia's gulf with glassy ice o'erspread.  
Where the lone native, as he homeward glides,  
On polished sandals o'er the imprisoned tides,  
And still the balance of his frame preserves,  
Wheeled on alternate foot in lengthening curves,  
Sees at a glance, above him and below,  
Two rival heavens with equal splendour glow.  
Sphered in the centre of the world he seems;  
For all around with soft effulgence gleams;  
Stars, moons, and meteors, ray opposed to ray,  
And solemn midnight pours the blaze of day."

He was a man of ardent feeling, and his faculties of mind, particularly his memory, were extraordinary. Brief notices of his life ought to find a place in the History of Westmoreland.

Page 603. Sonnets XVII and XVIII

The EAGLE requires a large domain for its support: but several pairs, not many years ago, were constantly resident in this country, building their nests in the steepes of Borrowdale, Wastdale, Ennerdale, and on the eastern side of Helvellyn. Often have I heard anglers speak of the grandeur of their appearance, as they hovered over

Red Tarn, in one of the coves of this mountain. The bird frequently returns, but is always destroyed. Not long since, one visited Rydal lake, and remained some hours near its banks: the consternation which it occasioned among the different species of fowl, particularly the herons, was expressed by loud screams. The horse also is naturally afraid of the eagle.—There were several Roman stations among these mountains; the most considerable seems to have been in a meadow at the head of Windermere, established, undoubtedly, as a check over the passes of Kirkstone, Dunmail-raise, and of Hardknot and Wrynose. On the margin of Rydal lake, a coin of Trajan was discovered very lately.—The ROMAN FORT here alluded to, called by the country people "*Hardknot Castle*," is most impressively situated half-way down the hill on the right of the road that descends from Hardknot into Eskdale. It has escaped the notice of most antiquarians, and is but slightly mentioned by Lysons.—The DRUIDICAL CIRCLE is about half a mile to the left of the road ascending Stone-side from the vale of Duddon: the country people call it "*Sunken Church*."

The reader who may have been interested in the foregoing Sonnets (which together may be considered as a Poem) will not be displeased to find in this place a prose account of the Duddon, extracted from Green's comprehensive *Guide to the Lakes*, lately published. "The road leading from Coniston to Broughton is over high ground, and commands a view of the River Duddon; which, at high water, is a grand sight, having the beautiful and fertile lands of Lancashire and Cumberland stretching each way from its margin. In this extensive view, the face of nature is displayed in a wonderful variety of hill and dale, wooded grounds and buildings; amongst the latter Broughton Tower, seated on the crown of a hill, rising elegantly from the valley, is an object of extraordinary interest. Fertility on each side is gradually diminished, and lost in the superior heights of Blackcomb, in Cumberland, and the high lands between Kirkby and Ulverstone.

"The road from Broughton to Seathwaite is on the banks of the Duddon, and on its Lancashire side it is of various

elevations. The river is an amusing companion, one while brawling and tumbling over rocky precipices, until the agitated water becomes again calm by arriving at a smoother and less precipitous bed, but its course is soon again ruffled, and the current thrown into every variety of foam which the rocky channel of a river can give to water."—*Vide Green's Guide to the Lakes*, vol. i. pp. 98-100.

After all, the traveller would be most gratified who should approach this beautiful Stream, neither at its source, as is done in the Sonnets, nor from its termination; but from Coniston over Walna Scar; first descending into a little circular valley, a collateral compartment of the long winding vale through which flows the Duddon. This recess, towards the close of September, when the after-grass of the meadows is still of a fresh green, with the leaves of many of the trees faded, but perhaps none fallen, is truly enchanting. At a point elevated enough to show the various objects in the valley, and not so high as to diminish their importance, the stranger will instinctively halt. On the foreground, a little below the most favourable station, a rude foot-bridge is thrown over the bed of the noisy brook foaming by the wayside. Russet and craggy hills, of bold and varied outline, surround the level valley, which is besprinkled with grey rocks plumed with birch trees. A few homesteads are interspersed, in some places peeping out from among the rocks like hermitages, whose site has been chosen for the benefit of sunshine as well as shelter; in other instances, the dwelling-house, barn, and byre, compose together a cruciform structure, which, with its embowering trees, and the ivy clothing part of the walls and roof like a fleece, call to mind the remains of an ancient abbey. Time, in most cases, and nature everywhere, have given a sanctity to the humble works of man that are scattered over this peaceful retirement. Hence a harmony of tone and colour, a consummation and perfection of beauty, which would have been marred had aim or purpose interfered with the course of convenience, utility, or necessity. This unvitiated region stands in no need of the veil of twilight to soften or disguise its features. As it glistens in the morning

sunshine, it would fill the spectator's heart with gladness. Looking from our chosen station, he would feel an impatience to rove among its pathways, to be greeted by the milkmaid, to wander from house to house exchanging "good-morrows" as he passed the open doors; but, at evening, when the sun is set, and a pearly light gleams from the western quarter of the sky, with an answering light from the smooth surface of the meadows; when the trees are dusky, but each kind still distinguishable; when the cool air has condensed the blue smoke rising from the cottage chimneys; when the dark mossy stones seem to sleep in the bed of the foaming brook; *then* he would be unwilling to move forward, not less from a reluctance to relinquish what he beholds, than from an apprehension of disturbing, by his approach, the quietness beneath him. Issuing from the plain of this valley, the brook descends in a rapid torrent passing by the churchyard of Seathwaite. The traveller is thus conducted at once into the midst of the wild and beautiful scenery which gave occasion to the Sonnets from the 14th to the 20th inclusive. From the point where the Seathwaite brook joins the Duddon is a view upwards into the pass through which the river makes its way into the plain of Donnerdale. The perpendicular rock on the right bears the ancient British name of THE PEN; the one opposite is called WALLA-BARROW CRAG, a name that occurs in other places to designate rocks of the same character. The *chaotic* aspect of the scene is well marked by the expression of a stranger, who strolled out while dinner was preparing, and at his return, being asked by his host, "What way he had been wandering?" replied, "As far as it is *finished*!"

The bed of the Duddon is here strewn with large fragments of rocks fallen from aloft; which, as Mr. Green truly says, "are happily adapted to the many-shaped waterfalls" (or rather waterbreaks, for none of them are high) "displayed in the short space of half a mile." That there is some hazard in frequenting these desolate places, I myself have had proof; for one night an immense mass of rock fell upon the very spot where, with a friend, I had

lingered the day before. "The concussion," says Mr. Green, speaking of the event (for he also, in the practice of his art, on that day sat exposed for a still longer time to the same peril), "was heard, not without alarm, by the neighbouring shepherds." But to return to Seathwaite Churchyard: it contains the following inscription:—

"In memory of the Reverend Robert Walker, who died the 25th of June 1802, in the 93d year of his age, and 67th of his curacy at Seathwaite.

"Also, of Anne his wife, who died the 28th of January, in the 93d year of her age."

In the parish-register of Seathwaite Chapel is this notice:—

"Buried, June 28th, the Rev. Robert Walker. He was curate of Seathwaite sixty-six years. He was a man singular for his temperance, industry, and integrity."

This individual is the Pastor alluded to, in the 18th Sonnet, as a worthy compeer of the country parson of Chaucer, etc. In the seventh book of the Excursion, an abstract of his character is given, beginning,

"A Priest abides before whose life such doubts  
Fall to the ground;—"

and some account of his life, for it is worthy of being recorded, will not be out of place here.

#### MEMOIR OF THE REV. ROBERT WALKER

In the year 1709, Robert Walker was born at Under-crag, in Seathwaite; he was the youngest of twelve children. His eldest brother, who inherited the small family estate, died at Under-crag, aged ninety-four, being twenty-four years older than the subject of this memoir, who was born of the same mother. Robert was a sickly infant; and, through his boyhood and youth, continuing to be of delicate frame and tender health, it was deemed best, according to the country phrase, to *breed him a scholar*; for it was not likely that he would be able to earn a livelihood by bodily labour. At that period few of these dales were furnished with school-houses; the children being taught to read

and write in the chapel; and in the same consecrated building, where he officiated for so many years both as preacher and schoolmaster, he himself received the rudiments of his education. In his youth he became schoolmaster at Loweswater; not being called upon, probably, in that situation to teach more than reading writing, and arithmetic. But, by the assistance of a "Gentleman" in the neighbourhood, he acquired, at leisure hours, a knowledge of the classics, and became qualified for taking holy orders. Upon his ordination, he had the offer of two curacies: the one, Torver, in the vale of Coniston,—the other, Seathwaite, in his native vale. The value of each was the same, viz. five pounds *per annum*; but the cure of Seathwaite having a cottage attached to it, as he wished to marry, he chose it in preference. The young person on whom his affections were fixed, though in the condition of a domestic servant, had given promise, by her serious and modest deportment, and by her virtuous dispositions, that she was worthy to become the helpmate of a man entering upon a plan of life such as he had marked out for himself. By her frugality she had stored up a small sum of money, with which they began housekeeping. In 1735 or 1736, he entered upon his curacy; and, nineteen years afterwards, his situation is thus described, in some letters to be found in the Annual Register for 1760, from which the following is extracted:—

"To Mr. —

"Coniston, July 26, 1754.

"SIR—I was the other day upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. Going into a clergyman's house (of whom I had frequently heard), I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as is commonly used in this country by the lower class of people, dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons; a checked shirt, a leathern strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great wooden-soled shoes plated with iron to preserve them



(what we call clogs in these parts), with a child upon his knee, eating his breakfast; his wife, and the remainder of his children, were some of them employed in waiting upon each other, the rest in teasing and spinning wool, at which trade he is a great proficient; and moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lay it, by sixteen or thirty-two pounds' weight, upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles, will carry it to the market, even in the depth of winter. I was not much surprised at all this, as you may possibly be, having heard a great deal of it related before. But I must confess myself astonished with the alacrity and the good humour that appeared both in the clergyman and his wife, and more so at the sense and ingenuity of the clergyman himself." \* \*

Then follows a letter from another person, dated 1755, from which an extract shall be given:—

"By his frugality and good management he keeps the wolf from the door, as we say; and if he advances a little in the world, it is owing more to his own care than to anything else he has to rely upon. I don't find his inclination is running after further preferment. He is settled among the people, that are happy among themselves; and lives in the greatest unanimity and friendship with them; and, I believe, the minister and people are exceedingly satisfied with each other; and indeed how should they be dissatisfied when they have a person of so much worth and probity for their pastor? A man who, for his candour and meekness, his sober, chaste, and virtuous conversation, his soundness in principle and practice, is an ornament to his profession, and an honour to the country he is in; and bear with me if I say, the plainness of his dress, the sanctity of his manners, the simplicity of his doctrine, and the vehemence of his expression, have a sort of resemblance to the pure practice of primitive Christianity."

We will now give his own account of himself, to be found in the same place.

FROM THE REV. ROBERT WALKER

"SIR—Yours of the 26th instant was communicated to me by Mr. C—, and I should have returned an immediate answer,

but the hand of Providence, then laying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearment, hath since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments the loss of; though we have yet eight living, all healthy, hopeful children, whose names and ages are as follows:—Zaccheus, aged almost eighteen years; Elizabeth, sixteen years and ten months; Mary, fifteen; Moses, thirteen years and three months; Sarah, ten years and three months; Mabel, eight years and three months; William Tyson, three years and eight months; and Anne Esther, one year and three months; besides Anne, who died two years and six months ago, and was then aged between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died the 23d inst., January, aged six years and ten months. Zaccheus, the eldest child, is now learning the trade of a tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual income of my chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to about 17*l.*, of which is paid in cash, viz. 5*l.* from the bounty of Queen Anne, and 5*l.* from W. P., Esq., of P—, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor, and 3*l.* from the several inhabitants of L—, settled upon the tenements as a rent-charge; the house and gardens I value at 4*l.* yearly, and not worth more; and I believe the surplice fees and voluntary contributions, one year with another, may be worth 3*l.*; but as the inhabitants are few in number, and the fees very low, this last-mentioned sum consists merely in free-will offerings.

"I am situated greatly to my satisfaction with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory, who not only live in the happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and goodwill with one another, and are seemingly (I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the established church, not one dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I got to the value of 40*l.* for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate of my own, being the youngest son of twelve children, born of obscure parents; and, though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet, by a providential blessing upon my

own diligent endeavours, the kindness of friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the necessities of life. By what I have written (which is a true and exact account, to the best of my knowledge) I hope you will not think your favour to me out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford's effects quite misbestowed, for which I must ever gratefully own myself, Sir, your much obliged and most obedient humble servant,

"R. W., Curate of S——.

"To Mr. C., of Lancaster."

About the time when this letter was written, the Bishop of Chester recommended the scheme of joining the curacy of Ulpha to the contiguous one of Seathwaite, and the nomination was offered to Mr. Walker; but an unexpected difficulty arising, Mr. W., in a letter to the Bishop (a copy of which, in his own beautiful handwriting, now lies before me), thus expresses himself. "If he," meaning the person in whom the difficulty originated, "had suggested any such objection before, I should utterly have declined any attempt to the curacy of Ulpha: indeed, I was always apprehensive it might be disagreeable to my auditory at Seathwaite, as they have been always accustomed to double duty, and the inhabitants of Ulpha despair of being able to support a schoolmaster who is not curate there also; which suppressed all thoughts in me of serving them both." And in a second letter to the Bishop he writes:—

"MY LORD—I have the favour of yours of the 1st instant, and am exceedingly obliged on account of the Ulpha affair: if that curacy should lapse into your Lordship's hands, I would beg leave rather to decline than embrace it; for the chapels of Seathwaite and Ulpha, annexed together, would be apt to cause a general discontent among the inhabitants of both places; by either thinking themselves slighted, being only served alternately, or neglected in the duty, or attributing it to covetousness in me; all which occasions of murmuring I would willingly avoid." And in concluding his former letter, he expresses a similar sentiment upon the same occasion, "desir-

ing, if it be possible, however, as much as in me lieth, to live peaceably with all men."

The year following, the curacy of Seathwaite was again augmented; and, to effect this augmentation, fifty pounds had been advanced by himself; and, in 1760, lands were purchased with eight hundred pounds. Scanty as was his income, the frequent offer of much better benefices could not tempt Mr. W. to quit a situation where he had been so long happy, with a consciousness of being useful. Among his papers I find the following copy of a letter, dated 1775, twenty years after his refusal of the curacy of Ulpha, which will show what exertions had been made for one of his sons.

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE—Our remote situation here makes it difficult to get the necessary information for transacting business regularly; such is the reason of my giving your Grace the present trouble.

"The bearer (my son) is desirous of offering himself candidate for deacon's orders at your Grace's ensuing ordination; the first, on the 25th instant, so that his papers could not be transmitted in due time. As he is now fully at age, and I have afforded him education to the utmost of my ability, it would give me great satisfaction (if your Grace would take him, and find him qualified) to have him ordained. His constitution has been tender for some years; he entered the college of Dublin, but his health would not permit him to continue there, or I would have supported him much longer. He has been with me at home above a year, in which time he has gained great strength of body, sufficient, I hope, to enable him for performing the function. Divine Providence, assisted by liberal benefactors, has blest my endeavours, from a small income, to rear a numerous family; and as my time of life renders me now unfit for much future expectancy from this world, I should be glad to see my son settled in a promising way to acquire an honest livelihood for himself. His behaviour, so far in life, has been irreproachable; and I hope he will not degenerate, in principles or practice, from the precepts and pattern of an indulgent parent. Your Grace's favourable reception of this, from a distant corner of the diocese, and an

obscure hand, will excite filial gratitude, and a due use shall be made of the obligation vouchsafed thereby to your Grace's very dutiful and most obedient Son and Servant,  
ROBERT WALKER.'

The same man, who was thus liberal in the education of his numerous family, was even munificent in hospitality as a parish priest. Every Sunday were served upon the long table, at which he has been described sitting with a child upon his knee, messes of broth for the refreshment of those of his congregation who came from a distance, and usually took their seats as parts of his own household. It seems scarcely possible that this custom could have commenced before the augmentation of his cure; and what would to many have been a high price of self-denial was paid, by the pastor and his family, for this gratification; as the treat could only be provided by dressing at one time the whole, perhaps, of their weekly allowance of fresh animal food; consequently, for a succession of days, the table was covered with cold victuals only. His generosity in old age may be still further illustrated by a little circumstance relating to an orphan grandson, then ten years of age, which I find in a copy of a letter to one of his sons; he requests that half a guinea may be left for "little Robert's pocket-money," who was then at school: intrusting it to the care of a lady, who, as he says, "may sometimes frustrate his squandering it away foolishly," and promising to send him an equal allowance annually for the same purpose. The conclusion of the same letter is so characteristic, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it. "We," meaning his wife and himself, "are in our wonted state of health, allowing for the hasty strides of old age knocking daily at our door, and threateningly telling us we are not only mortal, but must expect ere long to take our leave of our ancient cottage, and lie down in our last dormitory. Pray pardon my neglect to answer yours: let us hear sooner from you, to augment the mirth of the Christmas holidays. Wishing you all the pleasures of the approaching season, I am, dear Son, with lasting sincerity, yours affectionately,  
"ROBERT WALKER."

He loved old customs and old usages, and in some instances stuck to them to his own loss; for, having had a sum of money lodged in the hands of a neighbouring tradesman, when long course of time had raised the rate of interest, and more was offered, he refused to accept it; an act not difficult to one, who, while he was drawing seventeen pounds a year from his curacy, declined, as we have seen, to add the profits of another small benefice to his own, lest he should be suspected of cupidity. From this vice he was utterly free; he made no charge for teaching school; such as could afford to pay gave him what they pleased. When very young, having kept a diary of his expenses, however trifling, the large amount, at the end of the year, surprised him; and from that time the rule of his life was to be economical, not avaricious. At his decease he left behind him no less a sum than 2000*l.*; and such a sense of his various excellences was prevalent in the country, that the epithet of WONDERFUL is to this day attached to his name.

There is in the above sketch something so extraordinary as to require further *explanatory* details.—And to begin with his industry; eight hours in each day, during five days in the week, and half of Saturday, except when the labours of husbandry were urgent, he was occupied in teaching. His seat was within the rails of the altar; the communion table was his desk; and, like Shenstone's schoolmistress, the master employed himself at the spinning-wheel, while the children were repeating their lessons by his side. Every evening, after school hours, if not more profitably engaged, he continued the same kind of labour, exchanging, for the benefit of exercise, the small wheel, at which he had sate, for the large one on which wool is spun, the spinner stepping to and fro. Thus was the wheel constantly in readiness to prevent the waste of a moment's time. Nor was his industry with the pen, when occasion called for it, less eager. Intrusted with extensive management of public and private affairs, he acted, in his rustic neighbourhood, as scrivener, writing out petitions, deeds of conveyance, wills, covenants, etc., with pecuniary gain to

himself, and to the great benefit of his employers. These labours (at all times considerable) at one period of the year, viz. between Christmas and Candlemas, when money transactions are settled in this country, were often so intense, that he passed great part of the night, and sometimes whole nights, at his desk. His garden also was tilled by his own hand; he had a right of pasturage upon the mountains for a few sheep and a couple of cows, which required his attendance; with this pastoral occupation he joined the labours of husbandry upon a small scale, renting two or three acres in addition to his own less than one acre of glebe; and the humblest drudgery which the cultivation of these fields required was performed by himself.

He also assisted his neighbours in hay-making and shearing their flocks, and in the performance of this latter service he was eminently dexterous. They, in their turn, complimented him with the present of a haycock, or a fleece; less as a recompence for this particular service than as a general acknowledgment. The Sabbath was in a strict sense kept holy; the Sunday evenings being devoted to reading the Scripture and family prayer. The principal festivals appointed by the Church were also duly observed; but through every other day in the week, through every week in the year, he was incessantly occupied in work of hand or mind; not allowing a moment for recreation, except upon a Saturday afternoon, when he indulged himself with a Newspaper, or sometimes with a Magazine. The frugality and temperance established in his house were as admirable as the industry. Nothing to which the name of luxury could be given was there known; in the latter part of his life, indeed, when tea had been brought into almost general use, it was provided for visitors, and for such of his own family as returned occasionally to his roof, and had been accustomed to this refreshment elsewhere; but neither he nor his wife ever partook of it. The raiment worn by his family was comely and decent, but as simple as their diet; the home-spun materials were made up into apparel by their own hands. At the time of the

decease of this thrifty pair, their cottage contained a large store of webs of woollen and linen cloth, woven from thread of their own spinning. And it is remarkable that the pew in the chapel in which the family used to sit, remains neatly lined with woollen cloth spun by the pastor's own hands. It is the only pew in the chapel so distinguished; and I know of no other instance of his conformity to the delicate accommodations of modern times. The fuel of the house, like that of their neighbours, consisted of peat, procured from the mosses by their own labour. The lights by which, in the winter evenings, their work was performed, were of their own manufacture, such as still continue to be used in these cottages; they are made of the pith of rushes dipped in any unctuous substance that the house affords. *White* candles, as tallow candles are here called, were reserved to honour the Christmas festivals, and were perhaps produced upon no other occasions. Once a month, during the proper season, a sheep was drawn from their small mountain flock, and killed for the use of the family; and a cow, towards the close of the year was salted and dried for winter provision; the hide was tanned to furnish them with shoes.—By these various resources, this venerable clergyman reared a numerous family, not only preserving them, as he affectingly says, "from wanting the necessities of life;" but affording them an unstinted education, and the means of raising themselves in society. In this they were eminently assisted by the effects of their father's example, his precepts, and injunctions: he was aware that truth-speaking, as a moral virtue, is best secured by inculcating attention to accuracy of report even on trivial occasions; and so rigid were the rules of honesty by which he endeavoured to bring up his family, that if one of them had chanced to find in the lanes or fields anything of the least use or value without being able to ascertain to whom it belonged, he always insisted upon the child's carrying it back to the place from which it had been brought.

No one, it might be thought, could, as has been described, convert his body into a machine, as it were, of industry for the humblest uses, and keep his thoughts so

frequently bent upon secular concerns, without grievous injury to the more precious parts of his nature. How could the powers of intellect thrive, or its graces be displayed, in the midst of circumstances apparently so unfavourable, and where, to the direct cultivation of the mind, so small a portion of time was allotted? But, in this extraordinary man, things in their nature adverse were reconciled. His conversation was remarkable, not only for being chaste and pure, but for the degree in which it was fervent and eloquent; his written style was correct, simple, and animated. Nor did his *affections* suffer more than his intellect; he was tenderly alive to all the duties of his pastoral office: the poor and needy "he never sent empty away,"—the stranger was fed and refreshed in passing that unfrequented vale—the sick were visited; and the feelings of humanity found further exercise among the distresses and embarrassments in the worldly estate of his neighbours, with which his talents for business made him acquainted; and the disinterestedness, impartiality, and uprightness which he maintained in the management of all affairs confided to him were virtues seldom separated in his own conscience from religious obligation. Nor could such conduct fail to remind those who witnessed it of a spirit nobler than law or custom: they felt convictions which, but for such intercourse, could not have been afforded, that as in the practice of their pastor there was no guile, so in his faith there was nothing hollow; and we are warranted in believing that upon these occasions selfishness, obstinacy, and discord would often give way before the breathings of his good-will and saintly integrity. It may be presumed also—while his humble congregation were listening to the moral precepts which he delivered from the pulpit, and to the Christian exhortations that they should love their neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done unto—that peculiar efficacy was given to the preacher's labours by recollections in the minds of his congregation that they were called upon to do no more than his own actions were daily setting before their eyes.

The afternoon service in the chapel was

less numerously attended than that of the morning, but by a more serious auditory; the lesson from the New Testament, on those occasions, was accompanied by Burkitt's Commentaries. These lessons he read with impassioned emphasis, frequently drawing tears from his hearers, and leaving a lasting impression upon their minds. His devotional feelings and the powers of his own mind were further exercised, along with those of his family, in perusing the Scriptures: not only on the Sunday evenings, but on every other evening, while the rest of the household were at work, some one of the children, and in her turn the servant, for the sake of practice in reading, or for instruction, read the Bible aloud; and in this manner the whole was repeatedly gone through. That no common importance was attached to the observance of religious ordinances by his family, appears from the following memorandum by one of his descendants, which I am tempted to insert at length, as it is characteristic and somewhat curious. "There is a small chapel in the county palatine of Lancaster, where a certain clergyman has regularly officiated above sixty years, and a few months ago administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the same, to a decent number of devout communicants. After the clergyman had received himself, the first company out of the assembly who approached the altar, and kneeled down to be partakers of the sacred elements, consisted of the parson's wife, to whom he had been married upwards of sixty years; one son and his wife; four daughters, each with her husband; whose ages, all added together, amount to above 714 years. The several and respective distances from the place of each of their abodes to the chapel where they all communicated, will measure more than 1000 English miles. Though the narration will appear surprising, it is without doubt a fact that the same persons, exactly four years before, met at the same place, and all joined in performance of the same venerable duty."

He was indeed most zealously attached to the doctrine and frame of the Established Church. We have seen him congratulating himself that he had no dissenters in his

cure of any denomination. Some allowance must be made for the state of opinion when his first religious impressions were received, before the reader will acquit him of bigotry, when I mention that at the time of the augmentation of the cure, he refused to invest part of the money in the purchase of an estate offered to him upon advantageous terms, because the proprietor was a quaker;—whether from scrupulous apprehension that a blessing would not attend a contract framed for the benefit of the church between persons not in religious sympathy with each other; or, as a seeker of peace, he was afraid of the uncomplying disposition which at one time was too frequently conspicuous in that sect. Of this an instance had fallen under his own notice; for, while he taught school at Loweswater, certain persons of that denomination had refused to pay annual interest due under the title of Church-stock;<sup>1</sup> a great hardship upon the incumbent, for the curacy of Loweswater was then scarcely less poor than that of Seathwaite. To what degree this prejudice of his was blamable need not be determined;—certain it is, that he was not only desirous, as he himself says, to live in peace, but in love, with all men. He was placable, and charitable in his judgments; and, however correct in conduct and rigorous to himself, he was ever ready to forgive the trespasses of others, and to soften the censure that was cast upon their frailties.—It would be unpardonable to omit that, in the maintenance of his virtues, he received due support from the partner of his long life. She was equally strict, in attending to her share of their joint cares, nor less diligent in her appropriate occupations. A person who had been some time their servant in the latter part of their lives, concluded the panegyric of her mistress by saying to me, "She was no less excellent than her husband; she was good to the poor; she was good to everything!" He survived for a short time this virtuous companion. When she died, he ordered that her body should

be borne to the grave by three of her daughters and one granddaughter; and, when the corpse was lifted from the threshold, he insisted upon lending his aid, and feeling about, for he was then almost blind, took hold of a napkin fixed to the coffin; and, as a bearer of the body, entered the chapel, a few steps from the lowly parsonage.

What a contrast does the life of this obscurely-seated, and, in point of worldly wealth, poorly-repaid Churchman, present to that of a Cardinal Wolsey!

"O 'tis a burthen, Cromwell, 'tis a burthen  
Too heavy for a man who hopes for heaven!"

We have been dwelling upon images of peace in the moral world, that have brought us again to the quiet enclosure of consecrated ground in which this venerable pair lie interred. The sounding brook, that rolls close by the churchyard, without disturbing feeling or meditation, is now unfortunately laid bare; but not long ago it participated, with the chapel, the shade of some stately ash-trees, which will not spring again. While the spectator from this spot is looking round upon the girdle of stony mountains that encompasses the vale,—masses of rock, out of which monuments for all men that ever existed might have been hewn—it would surprise him to be told, as with truth he might be, that the plain blue slab dedicated to the memory of this aged pair is a production of a quarry in North Wales. It was sent as a mark of respect by one of their descendants from the vale of Festiniog, a region almost as beautiful as that in which it now lies!

Upon the Seathwaite Brook, at a small distance from the parsonage, has been erected a mill for spinning yarn; it is a mean and disagreeable object, though not unimportant to the spectator, as calling to mind the momentous changes wrought by such inventions in the frame of society—changes which have proved especially unfavourable to these mountain solitudes. So much had been effected by those new powers, before the subject of the preceding biographical sketch closed his life, that their operation could not escape his notice, and doubtless excited touching reflections upon the comparatively insignificant results

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Walker's charity being of that kind which "seeketh not her own," he would rather forego his rights than disstrain for dues which the parties liable refused, as a point of conscience, to pay.

of his own manual industry. But Robert Walker was not a man of times and circumstances; had he lived at a later period, the principle of duty would have produced application as unremitting; the same energy of character would have been displayed, though in many instances with widely-different effects.

With pleasure I annex, as illustrative and confirmatory of the above account, extracts from a paper in the *Christian Remembrancer*, October 1819: it bears an assumed signature, but is known to be the work of the Rev. Robert Bamford, vicar of Bishopton, in the county of Durham; a great-grandson of Mr. Walker, whose worth it commemorates, by a record not the less valuable for being written in very early youth.

"His house was a nursery of virtue. All the inmates were industrious, and cleanly, and happy. Sobriety, neatness, quietness, characterised the whole family. No railings, no idleness, no indulgence of passion were permitted. Every child, however young, had its appointed engagements; every hand was busy. Knitting, spinning, reading, writing, mending clothes, making shoes, were by the different children constantly performing. The father himself sitting amongst them, and guiding their thoughts, was engaged in the same occupations.

"He sate up late, and rose early; when the family were at rest, he retired to a little room which he had built on the roof of his house. He had slated it, and fitted it up with shelves for his books, his stock of cloth, wearing apparel, and his utensils. There many a cold winter's night, without fire, while the roof was glazed with ice, did he remain reading or writing till the day dawned. He taught the children in the chapel, for there was no schoolhouse. Yet in that cold, damp place he never had a fire. He used to send the children in parties either to his own fire at home or make them run up the mountain side.

"It may be further mentioned, that he was a passionate admirer of Nature; she was his mother, and he was a dutiful child. While engaged on the mountains, it was his greatest pleasure to view the rising sun;

and in tranquil evenings, as it slid behind the hills, he blessed its departure. He was skilled in fossils and plants; a constant observer of the stars and winds: the atmosphere was his delight. He made many experiments on its nature and properties. In summer he used to gather a multitude of flies and insects, and, by his entertaining description, amuse and instruct his children. They shared all his daily employments, and derived many sentiments of love and benevolence from his observations on the works and productions of nature. Whether they were following him in the field, or surrounding him in school, he took every opportunity of storing their minds with useful information.—Nor was the circle of his influence confined to Seathwaite. Many a distant mother has told her child of Mr. Walker, and begged him to be as good a man.

"Once, when I was very young, I had the pleasure of seeing and hearing that venerable old man in his 90th year, and even then, the calmness, the force, the perspicuity of his sermon, sanctified and adorned by the wisdom of grey hairs, and the authority of virtue, had such an effect upon my mind, that I never see a hoary-headed clergyman, without thinking of Mr. Walker. He allowed no dissenter or methodist to interfere in the instruction of the souls committed to his cure: and so successful were his exertions, that he had not one dissenter of any denomination whatever in the whole parish.—Though he avoided all religious controversies, yet when age had silvered his head, and virtuous piety had secured to his appearance reverence and silent honour, no one, however determined in his hatred of apostolic descent, could have listened to his discourse on ecclesiastical history and ancient times, without thinking that one of the beloved apostles had returned to mortality, and in that vale of peace had come to exemplify the beauty of holiness in the life and character of Mr. Walker.

"Until the sickness of his wife, a few months previous to her death, his health and spirits and faculties were unimpaired. But this misfortune gave him such a shock

that his constitution gradually decayed. His senses, except sight, still preserved their powers. He never preached with steadiness after his wife's death. His voice faltered: he always looked at the seat she had used. He could not pass her tomb without tears. He became, when alone, sad and melancholy, though still among his friends kind and good-humoured. He went to bed about twelve o'clock the night before his death. As his custom was, he went, tottering and leaning upon his daughter's arm, to examine the heavens, and meditate a few moments in the open air. 'How clear the moon shines to-night!' He said these words, sighed, and laid down. At six next morning he was found a corpse. Many a tear, and many a heavy heart, and many a grateful blessing followed him to the grave."

Having mentioned in this narrative the vale of Loweswater as a place where Mr. Walker taught school, I will add a few memoranda from its parish register, respecting a person apparently of desires as moderate, with whom he must have been intimate during his residence there.

"Let him that would, ascend the tottering seat  
Of courtly grandeur, and become as great  
As are his mounting wishes; but for me,  
Let sweet repose and rest my portion be.

HENRY FOREST, Curate."

"Honour, the idol which the most adore,  
Receives no homage from my knee;  
Content in privacy I value more  
Than all uneasy dignity."

"Henry Forest came to Loweswater, 1708,  
being 25 years of age."

"This curacy was twice augmented by Queen Anne's Bounty. The first payment, with great difficulty, was paid to Mr. John Curwen of London, on the 9th of May, 1724, deposited by me, Henry Forest, Curate of Loweswater. Ye said 9th of May, ye said Mr. Curwen went to the office, and saw my name registered there, &c. This, by the Providence of God, came by lot to this poor place.

"Hæc testor H. Forest."

In another place he records that the sycamore-trees were planted in the churchyard in 1710.

He died in 1741, having been curate

thirty-four years. It is not improbable that H. Forest was the gentleman who assisted Robert Walker in his classical studies at Loweswater.

To this parish register is prefixed a motto, of which the following verses are a part:

"Invigilate viri, tacito nam tempora gressu  
Diffugiunt, nulloque sono coconvertitur annus;  
Utendum est ætate, cito pede præterit ætas."

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'We feel that we are greater than we  
know.'

"And feel that I am happier than I know."  
MILTON.

The allusion to the Greek Poet will be obvious to the classical reader.

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'Living hill.'

"awhile the living hill  
Heaved with convulsive throes, and all was still."  
DR. DARWIN.

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'Ecclesiastical Sonnets.'

During the month of December 1820, I accompanied a much-beloved and honoured Friend in a walk through different parts of his estate, with a view to fix upon the site of a new Church which he intended to erect. It was one of the most beautiful mornings of a mild season,—our feelings were in harmony with the cherishing influences of the scene; and such being our purpose, we were naturally led to look back upon past events with wonder and gratitude, and on the future with hope. Not long afterwards, some of the Sonnets which will be found towards the close of this series were produced as a private memorial of that morning's occupation.

The Catholic Question, which was agitated in Parliament about that time, kept my thoughts in the same course; and it struck me that certain points in the Ecclesiastical History of our Country might advantageously be presented to view in verse. Accordingly, I took up the subject, and what I now offer to the reader was the result.



When this work was far advanced, I was agreeably surprised to find that my friend, Mr. Southey, had been engaged with similar views in writing a concise History of the Church in England. If our Productions, thus unintentionally coinciding, shall be found to illustrate each other, it will prove a high gratification to me, which I am sure my friend will participate.

W. WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, January 24, 1822.

For the convenience of passing from one point of the subject to another without shocks of abruptness, this work has taken the shape of a series of Sonnets: but the Reader, it is to be hoped, will find that the pictures are often so closely connected as to have jointly the effect of passages of a poem in a form of stanza to which there is no objection but one that bears upon the Poet only—its difficulty.

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'*Did Holy Paul,*' etc.

Stillingfleet adduces many arguments in support of this opinion, but they are unconvincing. The latter part of this Sonnet refers to a favourite notion of Roman Catholic writers, that Joseph of Arimathea and his companions brought Christianity into Britain, and built a rude church at Glastonbury; alluded to hereafter, in a passage upon the dissolution of monasteries.

#### Page 611

'*That Hill, whose flowery platform,*' etc.

This hill at St Alban's must have been an object of great interest to the imagination of the venerable Bede, who thus describes it, with a delicate feeling, delightful to meet with in that rude age, traces of which are frequent in his works:—"Variis herbarum floribus depictus imò usquequaque vestitus, in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil præceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longè latèque deductum in modum æquoris natura complanat, dignum videlicet eum pro insitâ sibi specie venustatis jam olim reddens, qui beati martyris cruore dicaretur."

#### Page 612

'*Nor wants the cause the panic-striking aid  
Of hallelujahs.*'

Alluding to the victory gained under Germanus.—See Bede.

#### Page 612

'*By men yet scarcely conscious of a care  
For other monuments than those of Earth.*'

The last six lines of this Sonnet are chiefly from the prose of Daniel; and here I will state (though to the Readers whom this Poem will chiefly interest it is unnecessary) that my obligations to other prose writers are frequent,—obligations which, even if I had not a pleasure in courting, it would have been presumptuous to shun, in treating an historical subject. I must, however, particularise Fuller, to whom I am indebted in the Sonnet upon Wicliffe and in other instances. And upon the acquittal of the Seven Bishops I have done little more than versify a lively description of that event in the MS. Memoirs of the first Lord Lonsdale.

#### Page 612. Sonnet XII

"Ethelforth reached the convent of Bangor, he perceived the Monks, twelve hundred in number, offering prayers for the success of their countrymen: 'If they are praying against us,' he exclaimed, 'they are fighting against us;' and he ordered them to be first attacked: they were destroyed; and, appalled by their fate, the courage of Brocmail wavered, and he fled from the field in dismay. Thus abandoned by their leader, his army soon gave way, and Ethelforth obtained a decisive conquest. Ancient Bangor itself soon fell into his hands, and was demolished; the noble monastery was levelled to the ground; its library, which is mentioned as a large one, the collection of ages, the repository of the most precious monuments of the ancient Britons, was consumed; half-ruined walls, gates, and rubbish were all that remained of the magnificent edifice."—See Turner's valuable history of the Anglo-Saxons.

Taliesin was present at the battle which preceded this desolation.

The account Bede gives of this remarkable event suggests a most striking warning against National and Religious prejudices.

Page 613. Sonnet xv

The person of Paulinus is thus described by Bede, from the memory of an eye-witness:—"Longæstaturæ, paululum incurvus, nigro capillo, facie macilentâ, naso adunco, pertenui, venerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu."

Page 613

*'Man's life is like a Sparrow.'*

See the original of this speech in Bede.—The Conversion of Edwin, as related by him, is highly interesting—and the breaking up of this Council accompanied with an event so striking and characteristic, that I am tempted to give it at length in a translation. "Who, exclaimed the King, when the Council was ended, shall first desecrate the altars and the temples? I, answered the Chief Priest; for who more fit than myself, through the wisdom which the true God hath given me, to destroy, for the good example of others, what in foolishness I worshipped? Immediately, casting away vain superstition, he besought the King to grant him what the laws did not allow to a priest, arms and a courser (equum emisarium); which mounting, and furnished with a sword and lance, he proceeded to destroy the Idols. The crowd, seeing this, thought him mad—he, however, halted not, but, approaching, he profaned the temple, casting against it the lance which he had held in his hand, and, exulting in acknowledgment of the worship of the true God, he ordered his companions to pull down the temple, with all its enclosures. The place is shown where those idols formerly stood, not far from York, at the source of the river Derwent, and is at this day called Gormund Gaham, ubi pontifex ille, inspirante Deo vero, polluit ac destruxit eas, quas ipse sacraverat aras." The last expression is a pleasing proof that the venerable monk of Wearmouth was familiar with the poetry of Virgil.

Page 613

*such the inviting voice  
Heard near fresh streams.'*

The early propagators of Christianity were accustomed to preach near rivers, for the convenience of baptism.

Page 614. Sonnet xix

Having spoken of the zeal, disinterestedness, and temperance of the clergy of those times, Bede thus proceeds:—"Unde et in magna erat veneratione tempore illo religionis habitus, ita ut ubicunque clericus aliquis, aut monachus adveniret, gaudenter ab omnibus tanquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere pergens inveniretur, accurrebant, et flexâ cervice, vel manu signari, vel ore illius se benedici, gaudebant. Verbis quoque horum exhortatoriis diligenter auditum præbebant." Lib. iii. cap. 26.

Page 615

*'The people work like congregated bees.'*

See, in Turner's History, vol. iii. p. 528, the account of the erection of Ramsey Monastery. Penances were removable by the performance of acts of charity and benevolence.

Page 615

*—'pain narrows not his cares.'*

Through the whole of his life, Alfred was subject to grievous maladies.

Page 616

*'Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey!'*

The violent measures carried on under the influence of *Dunstan*, for strengthening the Benedictine Order, were a leading cause of the second series of Danish invasions.—See *Turner*.

Page 619

*'Here Man more purely lives,' etc.*

"Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securius, moritur feliciter, purgatur citius, præmiatur copiosius."

—Bernard. "This sentence," says Dr. Whitaker, "is usually inscribed in some conspicuous part of the Cistercian houses."

Page 622

*'Whom Obloquy pursues with hideous bark.'*

The list of foul names bestowed upon those poor creatures is long and curious;—and, as is, alas! too natural, most of the opprobrious appellations are drawn from circumstances into which they were forced by their persecutors, who even consolidated their miseries into one reproachful term, calling them Patarenians, or Paturins, from *patis*, to suffer.

"Dwellers with wolves, she names them, for the pine

And green oak are their covert; as the gloom  
Of night oft foils their enemy's design,  
She calls them Riders on the flying broom  
Sorcerers, whose frame and aspect have become  
One and the same through practices malign."

Page 623

*'And the green lizard and the gilded newt  
Lead unmolested lives, and die of age.'*

These two lines are adopted from a MS., written about the year 1770, which accidentally fell into my possession. The close of the preceding Sonnet on monastic voluptuousness is taken from the same source, as is the verse, "Where Venus sits," etc., and the line, "Once ye were holy, ye are holy still," in a subsequent Sonnet.

Page 626

*'One (like those prophets whom God sent of  
old)  
Transfigured,' etc.*

"M. Latimer suffered his keeper very quietly to pull off his hose, and his other array, which to look unto was very simple: and being stripped into his shrowd, he seemed as comely a person to them that were present, as one should lightly see: and whereas in his clothes he appeared a withered and crooked sillie (weak) olde man, he now stood bolt upright, as comely a

father as one might lightly behold.  
\* \* \* \* Then they brought a faggotte, kindled with fire, and laid the same downe at doctor Ridley's feete. To whome M. Latimer spake in this manner, 'Bee of good comfort, master Ridley, and play the man: wee shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never be put out.'—*Fox's Acts, etc.*

Similar alterations in the outward figure and deportment of persons brought to like trial were not uncommon. See note to the above passage in Dr. Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Biography, for an example in an humble Welsh fisherman.

Page 627

*'The gift exalting, and with playful  
smile.'*

"On foot they went, and took Salisbury in their way, purposely to see the good Bishop, who made Mr. Hooker sit at his own table; which Mr. Hooker boasted of with much joy and gratitude when he saw his mother and friends; and at the Bishop's parting with him, the Bishop gave him good counsel and his benediction, but forgot to give him money; which when the Bishop had considered, he sent a servant in all haste to call Richard back to him, and at Richard's return, the Bishop said to him, 'Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile, and I thank God with much ease,' and presently delivered into his hand a walking-staff, with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany; and he said, 'Richard, I do not give, but lend you my horse; be sure you be honest, and bring my horse back to me, at your return this way to Oxford. And I do now give you ten groats to bear your charges to Exeter; and here is ten groats more, which I charge you to deliver to your mother, and tell her I send her a Bishop's benediction with it, and beg the continuance of her prayers for me. And if you bring my horse back to me, I will give you ten groats more to carry you on foot to the college; and so God bless you, good Richard.'—See *Walton's Life of Richard Hooker.*

Page 628

— 'craftily incites  
*The overweening, personates the mad.'*

A common device in religious and political conflicts.—See *Strype in support of this instance.*

Page 629

'Laud.'

In this age a word cannot be said in praise of Laud, or even in compassion for his fate, without incurring a charge of bigotry; but fearless of such imputation, I concur with Hume, "that it is sufficient for his vindication to observe that his errors were the most excusable of all those which prevailed during that zealous period." A key to the right understanding of those parts of his conduct that brought the most odium upon him in his own time, may be found in the following passage of his speech before the bar of the House of Peers:—"Ever since I came in place, I have laboured nothing more than that the external public worship of God, so much slighted in divers parts of this kingdom, might be preserved, and that with as much decency and uniformity as might be. For I evidently saw that the public neglect of God's service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying of many places dedicated to that service, *had almost cast a damp upon the true and inward worship of God, which while we live in the body, needs external helps, and all little enough to keep it in any vigour.*"

Page 632

'*The Pilgrim Fathers.*'

American episcopacy, in union with the church in England, strictly belongs to the general subject; and I here make my acknowledgments to my American friends Bishop Doane, and Mr. Henry Reed of Philadelphia, for having suggested to me the propriety of adverting to it, and pointed out the virtues and intellectual qualities of Bishop White, which so eminently fitted him for the great work he undertook. Bishop White was consecrated at Lambeth, Feb. 4, 1787, by Archbishop Moore; and before his long life was closed, twenty-six bishops had been consecrated in America

by himself. For his character and opinions, see his own numerous works, and a "Sermon in commemoration of him, by George Washington Doane, Bishop of New Jersey."

Page 633

'*A genial hearth—  
 And a refined rusticity, belong  
 To the neat mansion.*'

Among the benefits arising, as Mr. Coleridge has well observed, from a Church establishment of endowments corresponding with the wealth of the country to which it belongs, may be reckoned as eminently important the examples of civility and refinement which the clergy stationed at intervals afford to the whole people. The established clergy in many parts of England have long been, as they continue to be, the principal bulwark against barbarism, and the link which unites the sequestered peasantry with the intellectual advancement of the age. Nor is it below the dignity of the subject to observe that their taste, as acting upon rural residences and scenery, often furnishes models which country gentlemen, who are more at liberty to follow the caprices of fashion, might profit by. The precincts of an old residence must be treated by ecclesiastics with respect, both from prudence and necessity. I remember being much pleased, some years ago, at Rose Castle, the rural seat of the See of Carlisle, with a style of garden and architecture which, if the place had belonged to a wealthy layman, would no doubt have been swept away. A parsonage house generally stands not far from the church; this proximity imposes favourable restraints, and sometimes suggests an affecting union of the accommodations and elegancies of life with the outward signs of piety and mortality. With pleasure I recall to mind a happy instance of this in the residence of an old and much-valued Friend in Oxfordshire. The house and church stand parallel to each other, at a small distance; a circular lawn, or rather grass-plot, spreads between them; shrubs and trees curve from each side of the dwelling, veiling, but not hiding, the church. From the front of this dwelling no part of the burial-ground is seen; but

as you wind by the side of the shrubs towards the steeple-end of the church, the eye catches a single, small, low, monumental headstone, moss-grown, sinking into and gently inclining towards the earth. Advance, and the churchyard, populous and gay with glittering tombstones, opens upon the view. This humble and beautiful parsonage called forth a tribute, for which see the sonnet entitled "A Parsonage in Oxfordshire," p. 607.

Page 637. Sonnet XXXII

This is still continued in many churches in Westmoreland. It takes place in the month of July, when the floor of the stalls is strewn with fresh rushes; and hence it is called the "Rush-bearing."

Page 637

*'Teaching us to forget them or forgive.'*

This is borrowed from an affecting passage in Mr. George Dyer's history of Cambridge.

Page 638

*—'had we, like them, endured  
Sore stress of apprehension.'*

See Burnet, who is unusually animated on this subject; the east wind, so anxiously expected and prayed for, was called the "Protestant wind."

Page 639

*'Yet will we not conceal the precious Cross,  
Like men ashamed.'*

The Lutherans have retained the Cross within their churches: it is to be regretted that we have not done the same.

Page 640

*'Or like the Alpine Mount, that takes its  
name  
From roseate hues,' etc.*

Some say that Monte Rosa takes its name from a belt of rock at its summit—a very unpoetical and scarcely a probable supposition.

Page 653

*—'more high, the Dacian force,  
To hoof and finger mailed.'*

Here and infra, see Forsyth.

Page 654

*'Something less than joy, but more than  
dull content.'*

COUNTESS OF WINCHILSEA.

Page 658

*'Wild Redbreast,' etc.*

This Sonnet, as Poetry, explains itself, yet the scene of the incident having been a wild wood, it may be doubted, as a point of natural history, whether the bird was aware that his attentions were bestowed upon a human, or even a living creature. But a Redbreast will perch upon the foot of a gardener at work, and alight on the handle of the spade when his hand is half upon it—this I have seen. And under my own roof I have witnessed affecting instances of the creature's friendly visits to the chambers of sick persons, as described in the verses to the Redbreast, page 774. One of these welcome intruders used frequently to roost upon a nail in the wall, from which a picture had hung, and was ready, as morning came, to pipe his song in the hearing of the Invalid, who had been long confined to her room. These attachments to a particular person, when marked and continued, used to be reckoned ominous; but the superstition is passing away.

Page 663

*'The Wishing-gate.'*

"In the Vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old high-way leading to Ambleside, is a gate which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-gate."

Having been told, upon what I thought good authority, that this gate had been destroyed, and the opening, where it hung, walled up, I gave vent immediately to my feelings in these stanzas. But going to the place some time after, I found, with much delight, my old favourite unmolested.

Page 672

*'Descending to the worm in charity.'*

I am indebted, here, to a passage in one of Mr. Digby's valuable works.

Page 677

*'The Russian Fugitive.'*

Peter Henry Bruce, having given in his entertaining Memoirs the substance of this Tale, affirms that, besides the concurring reports of others, he had the story from the lady's own mouth.

The Lady Catherine, mentioned towards the close, is the famous Catherine, then bearing that name as the acknowledged Wife of Peter the Great.

Page 697

*'Highland Hut.'*

This sonnet describes the *exterior* of a Highland hut, as often seen under a morning or evening sunshine. To the authoress of the "Address to the Wind," and other poems, in this volume, who was my fellow-traveller in this tour, I am indebted for the following extract from her journal, which accurately describes, under particular circumstances, the beautiful appearance of the *interior* of one of these rude habitations.

"On our return from the Trosachs the evening began to darken, and it rained so heavily that we were completely wet before we had come two miles, and it was dark when we landed with our boatman, at his hut upon the banks of Loch Katrine. I was faint from cold: the good woman had provided, according to her promise, a better fire than we had found in the morning; and, indeed, when I sat down in the chimney-corner of her smoky biggin, I thought I had never felt more comfortable in my life: a pan of coffee was boiling for us, and having put our clothes in the way of drying, we all sat down thankful for a shelter. We could not prevail upon our boatman, the master of the house, to draw near the fire, though he was cold and wet,

or to suffer his wife to get him dry clothes till she had served us, which she did most willingly, though not very expeditiously.

"A Cumberland man of the same rank would not have had such a notion of what was fit and right in his own house, or, if he had, one would have accused him of servility; but in the Highlander it only seemed like politeness (however erroneous and painful to us), naturally growing out of the dependence of the inferiors of the clan upon their laird; he did not, however, refuse to let his wife bring out the whisky bottle for his refreshment, at our request. "She keeps a dram," as the phrase is: indeed, I believe there is scarcely a lonely house by the wayside, in Scotland, where travellers may not be accommodated with a dram. We asked for sugar, butter, barley-bread, and milk: and, with a smile and a stare more of kindness than wonder, she replied, "Ye'll get that," bringing each article separately. We caroused our cups of coffee, laughing like children at the strange atmosphere in which we were: the smoke came in gusts, and spread along the walls; and above our heads in the chimney (where the hens were roosting) it appeared like clouds in the sky. We laughed and laughed again, in spite of the smarting of our eyes, yet had a quieter pleasure in observing the beauty of the beams and rafters gleaming between the clouds of smoke: they had been crusted over and varnished by many winters, till, where the firelight fell upon them, they had become as glossy as black rocks, on a sunny day, cased in ice. When we had eaten our supper we sat about half an hour, and I think I never felt so deeply the blessing of a hospitable welcome and a warm fire. The man of the house repeated from time to time that we should often tell of this night when we got to our homes, and interposed praises of his own lake, which he had more than once, when we were returning in the boat, ventured to say was 'bonnier than Loch Lomond.' Our companion from the Trosachs, who, it appeared, was an Edinburgh drawing-master going, during the vacation, on a pedestrian tour to John O'Groat's House, was to sleep in the barn with my fellow-travellers, where the man said he had plenty

of dry hay. I do not believe that the hay of the Highlands is ever very dry, but this year it had a better chance than usual: wet or dry, however, the next morning they said they had slept comfortably. When I went to bed, the mistress, desiring me to 'go ben,' attended me with a candle, and assured me that the bed was dry, though not 'sic as I had been used to.' It was of chaff; there were two others in the room, a cupboard and two chests, upon one of which stood milk in wooden vessels covered over. The walls of the house were of stone unplastered; it consisted of three apartments, the cow-house at one end, the kitchen or house in the middle, and the spence at the other end; the rooms were divided, not up to the rigging, but only to the beginning of the roof, so that there was a free passage for light and smoke from one end of the house to the other. I went to bed some time before the rest of the family; the door was shut between us, and they had a bright fire, which I could not see, but the light it sent up amongst the varnished rafters and beams, which crossed each other in almost as intricate and fantastic a manner as I have seen the underboughs of a large beech-tree withered by the depth of shade above, produced the most beautiful effect that can be conceived. It was like what I should suppose an underground cave or temple to be with a dripping or moist roof, and the moonlight entering in upon it by some means or other; and yet the colours were more like those of melted gems. I lay looking up till the light of the fire faded away, and the man and his wife and child had crept into their bed at the other end of the room; I did not sleep much, but passed a comfortable night; for my bed, though hard, was warm and clean: the unusualness of my situation prevented me from sleeping. I could hear the waves beat against the shore of the lake; a little rill close to the door made a much louder noise, and, when I sat up in my bed, I could see the lake through an open window-place at the bed's head. Add to this, it rained all night. I was less occupied by remembrance of the Trosachs, beautiful as they were, than the vision of the Highland hut, which I could not get out of my head; I thought of the Faery-

land of Spenser, and what I had read in romance at other times; and then what a feast it would be for a London Pantomime-maker could he but transplant it to Drury-lane, with all its beautiful colours!"—*MS.*

#### Page 698

*'Once on those steepes I roamed.'*

The following is from the same *MS.*, and gives an account of the visit to Bothwell Castle here alluded to:

"It was exceedingly delightful to enter thus unexpectedly upon such a beautiful region. The castle stands nobly, overlooking the Clyde. When we came up to it, I was hurt to see that flower-borders had taken place of the natural overgrowings of the ruin, the scattered stones, and wild plants. It is a large and grand pile of red freestone, harmonising perfectly with the rocks of the river, from which, no doubt, it has been hewn. When I was a little accustomed to the unnaturalness of a modern garden, I could not help admiring the excessive beauty and luxuriance of some of the plants, particularly the purple-flowered clematis, and a broad-leaved creeping plant without flowers, which scrambled up the castle wall, along with the ivy, and spread its vine-like branches so lavishly that it seemed to be in its natural situation, and one could not help thinking that, though not self-planted among the ruins of this country, it must somewhere have its native abode in such places. If Bothwell Castle had not been close to the Douglas mansion, we should have been disgusted with the possessor's miserable conception of *adorning* such a venerable ruin; but it is so very near to the house, that of necessity the pleasure-grounds must have extended beyond it, and perhaps the neatness of a shaven lawn, and the complete desolation natural to a ruin, might have made an unpleasant contrast; and, besides being within the precincts of the pleasure-grounds, and so very near to the dwelling of a noble family, it has forfeited, in some degree, its independent majesty, and becomes a tributary to the mansion: its solitude being interrupted, it has no longer the command over the mind in sending it back into past times, or ex-

cluding the ordinary feelings which we bear about us in daily life. We had then only to regret that the castle and the house were so near to each other; and it was impossible *not* to regret it; for the ruin presides in state over the river, far from city or town, as if it might have a peculiar privilege to preserve its memorials of past ages, and maintain its own character for centuries to come. We sat upon a bench under the high trees, and had beautiful views of the different reaches of the river, above and below. On the opposite bank, which is finely wooded with elms and other trees, are the remains of a priory built upon a rock; and rock and ruin are so blended, that it is impossible to separate the one from the other. Nothing can be more beautiful than the little remnant of this holy place; elm-trees (for we were near enough to distinguish them by their branches) grow out of the walls, and overshadow a small, but very elegant window. It can scarcely be conceived what a grace the castle and priory impart to each other; and the river Clyde flows on, smooth and unruffled, below, seeming to my thoughts more in harmony with the sober and stately images of former times, than if it had roared over a rocky channel, forcing its sound upon the ear. It blended gently with the warbling of the smaller birds, and the chattering of the larger ones that had made their nests in the ruins. In this fortress the chief of the English nobility were confined after the battle of Bannockburn. If a man *is* to be a prisoner, he scarcely could have a more pleasant place to solace his captivity; but I thought that, for close confinement, I should prefer the banks of a lake, or the seaside. The greatest charm of a brook or river is in the liberty to pursue it through its windings; you can then take it in whatever mood you like; silent or noisy, sportive or quiet. The beauties of a brook or river must be sought, and the pleasure is in going in search of them; those of a lake or of the sea come to you of themselves. These rude warriors cared little, perhaps, about either; and yet, if one may judge from the writings of Chaucer and from the old romances, more interesting passions were connected with natural objects in the days of chivalry than now; though going in search of scenery,

as it is called, had not then been thought of. I had previously heard nothing of Bothwell Castle, at least nothing that I remembered; therefore, perhaps, my pleasure was greater, compared with what I received elsewhere, than others might feel."—*MS. Journal.*

Page 699

'*Hart's-horn Tree.*'

"In the time of the first Robert de Clifford, in the year 1333 or 1334, Edward Baliol king of Scotland came into Westmoreland, and stayed some time with the said Robert at his castles of Appleby, Brougham, and Pendragon. And during that time they ran a stag by a single greyhound out of Whinfell Park to Redkirk, in Scotland, and back again to this place; where, being both spent, the stag leaped over the pales, but died on the other side; and the greyhound, attempting to leap, fell, and died on the contrary side. In memory of this fact the stag's horns were nailed upon a tree just by, and (the dog being named Hercules) this rhythm was made upon them:

'Hercules killed Hart a greese,  
And Hart a greese killed Hercules.'

The tree to this day bears the name of Hart's-horn Tree. The horns in process of time were almost grown over by the growth of the tree, and another pair was put up in their place."—*Nicholson and Burns's History of Westmoreland and Cumberland.*

The tree has now disappeared, but I well remember its imposing appearance as it stood, in a decayed state, by the side of the highroad leading from Penrith to Appleby. This whole neighbourhood abounds in interesting traditions and vestiges of antiquity, viz. Julian's Bower; Brougham and Penrith Castles; Penrith Beacon, and the curious remains in Penrith Churchyard; Arthur's Round Table, and, close by, Maybrough; the excavation, called the Giant's Cave, on the banks of the Emont; Long Meg and her Daughters, near Eden, etc.

Page 712

'*But if thou (like Cocyfus,) etc.*

Many years ago, when I was at Greta



Bridge, in Yorkshire, the hostess of the inn, proud of her skill in etymology, said, that "the name of the river was taken from the *bridge*, the form of which, as every one must notice, exactly resembled a great A." Dr. Whitaker has derived it from the word of common occurrence in the north of England, "*to greet*;" signifying to lament aloud, mostly with weeping: a conjecture rendered more probable from the stony and rocky channel of both the Cumberland and Yorkshire rivers. The Cumberland Greta, though it does not, among the country people, take up *that* name till within three miles of its disappearance in the river Derwent, may be considered as having its source in the mountain cove of Wythburn, and thence flowing through Thirlmere. The beautiful features of that lake are known only to those who, travelling between Grasmere and Keswick, have quitted the main road in the vale of Wythburn, and, crossing over to the opposite side of the lake, have proceeded with it on the right hand.

The channel of the Greta, immediately above Keswick, has, for the purposes of building, been in a great measure cleared of the immense stones which, by their concussion in high floods, produced the loud and awful noises described in the sonnet.

"The scenery upon this river," says Mr. Southey in his *Colloquies*, "where it passes under the woody side of Latrigg, is of the finest and most memorable kind:—

'— ambiguo lapsu refuitque fluitque,  
Occurresque sibi venturas aspicit undas."

#### Page 713

'*By hooded Volaresses,*' etc.

Attached to the church of Brigham was formerly a chantry, which held a moiety of the manor; and in the decayed parsonage some vestiges of monastic architecture are still to be seen.

#### Page 713

'*Mary Queen of Scots landing at Workington.*'

"The fears and impatience of Mary were so great," says Robertson, "that she got

into a fisher-boat, and with about twenty attendants landed at Workington, in Cumberland; and thence she was conducted with many marks of respect to Carlisle." The apartment in which the Queen had slept at Workington Hall (where she was received by Sir Henry Curwen as became her rank and misfortunes) was long preserved, out of respect to her memory, as she had left it; and one cannot but regret that some necessary alterations in the mansion could not be effected without its destruction.

#### Page 713

St. Bees' Heads, anciently called the Cliff of Baruth, are a conspicuous sea-mark for all vessels sailing in the N.E. parts of the Irish Sea. In a bay, one side of which is formed by the southern headland, stands the village of St. Bees; a place distinguished, from very early times, for its religious and scholastic foundations.

"St. Bees," say Nicholson and Burns, "had its name from Bega, an holy woman from Ireland, who is said to have founded here, about the year of our Lord 650, a small monastery, where afterwards a church was built in memory of her.

"The aforesaid religious house, being destroyed by the Danes, was restored by William de Meschiens, son of Ranulph, and brother of Ranulph de Meschiens, first Earl of Cumberland after the Conquest; and made a cell of a prior and six Benedictine monks to the Abbey of St. Mary at York."

Several traditions of miracles, connected with the foundation of the first of these religious houses, survive among the people of the neighbourhood; one of which is alluded to in these Stanzas; and another, of a somewhat bolder and more peculiar character, has furnished the subject of a spirited poem by the Rev. R. Parkinson, M.A., late Divinity Lecturer of St. Bees' College, and now Fellow of the Collegiate Church of Manchester.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, Archbishop Grindal founded a free school at St. Bees, from which the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland have derived great benefit; and recently, under the patronage of the Earl of Lonsdale, a college has

been established there for the education of ministers for the English Church. The old Conventual Church has been repaired under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Ainger, the Head of the College, and is well worthy of being visited by any strangers who might be led to the neighbourhood of this celebrated spot.

The form of stanza in this Poem, and something in the style of versification, are adopted from the "St. Monica," a poem of much beauty upon a monastic subject, by Charlotte Smith: a lady to whom English verse is under greater obligations than are likely to be either acknowledged or remembered. She wrote little, and that little unambitiously, but with true feeling for rural nature, at a time when nature was not much regarded by English Poets; for in point of time her earlier writings preceded, I believe, those of Cowper and Burns.

Page 715

*'Are not, in sooth, their Requiems sacred ties.'*

I am aware that I am here treading upon tender ground; but to the intelligent reader I feel that no apology is due. The prayers of survivors, during passionate grief for the recent loss of relatives and friends, as the object of those prayers could no longer be the suffering body of the dying, would naturally be ejaculated for the souls of the departed; the barriers between the two worlds dissolving before the power of love and faith. The ministers of religion, from their habitual attendance upon sick-beds, would be daily witnesses of these benign results; and hence would be strongly tempted to aim at giving to them permanence, by embodying them in rites and ceremonies, recurring at stated periods. All this, as it was in course of nature, was it blameless, and even praiseworthy; some of its effects, in that rude state of society, could not but be salutary. No reflecting person, however, can view without sorrow the abuses which rose out of thus formalising sublime instincts, and disinterested movements of passion, and perverting them into means of gratifying the ambition and rapacity of the priesthood. But, while we deplore and are indignant at

these abuses, it would be a great mistake if we imputed the origin of the offices to prospective selfishness on the part of the monks and clergy: *they* were at first sincere in their sympathy, and in their degree dupes rather of their own creed, than artful and designing men. Charity is, upon the whole, the safest guide that we can take in judging our fellow-men, whether of past ages or of the present time.

Page 717

*'And they are led by noble Hillary.'*

The TOWER OF REFUGE, an ornament to Douglas Bay, was erected chiefly through the humanity and zeal of Sir William Hillary; and he also was the founder of the lifeboat establishment at that place; by which, under his superintendence, and often by his exertions at the imminent hazard of his own life, many seamen and passengers have been saved.

Page 718

*'By a retired Mariner.'*

This unpretending sonnet is by a gentleman nearly connected with me, and I hope, as it falls so easily into its place, that both the writer and the reader will excuse its appearance here.

Page 718

*'Off with yon cloud, old Snafell!'*

The summit of this mountain is well chosen by Cowley as the scene of the "Vision," in which the spectral angel discourses with him concerning the government of Oliver Cromwell. "I found myself," says he, "on the top of that famous hill in the Island Mona, which has the prospect of three great, and not long since most happy, kingdoms. As soon as ever I looked upon them, they called forth the sad representation of all the sins and all the miseries that had overwhelmed them these twenty years." It is not to be denied that the changes now in progress, and the passions, and the way in which they work, strikingly resemble those which led to the disasters the philosophic writer so feelingly bewails. God grant that the resemblance

may not become still more striking as months and years advance!

Page 719

*'On revisiting Dunolly Castle.'*

This ingenious piece of workmanship, as I afterwards learned, had been executed for their own amusement by some labourers employed about the place.

Page 721

*'Cave of Staffa.'*

The reader may be tempted to exclaim, "How came this and the two following sonnets to be written, after the dissatisfaction expressed in the preceding one?" In fact, at the risk of incurring the reasonable displeasure of the master of the steamboat, I returned to the cave, and explored it under circumstances more favourable to those imaginative impressions which it is so wonderfully fitted to make upon the mind.

Page 722

*'Hope smiled when your nativity was cast,  
Children of Summer!'*

Upon the head of the columns which form the front of the cave rests a body of decomposed basaltic matter, which was richly decorated with that large bright flower, the ox-eyed daisy. I had noticed the same flower growing with profusion among the bold rocks on the western coast of the Isle of Man; making a brilliant contrast with their black and gloomy surfaces.

Page 722

*'Iona.'*

The four last lines of this sonnet are adopted from a well-known sonnet of Russel, as conveying my feeling better than any words of my own could do.

Page 724

*'Yet fetched from Paradise.'*

It is to be feared that there is more of the poet than the sound etymologist in this derivation of the name Eden. On the western coast of Cumberland is a rivulet which enters the sea at Moresby, known

also in the neighbourhood by the name of Eden. May not the latter syllable come from the word Dean, a valley? Langdale near Ambleside, is by the inhabitants called Langden. The former syllable occurs in the name Emont, a principal feeder of the Eden; and the stream which flows, when the tide is out, over Cartmel Sands, is called the Ea—eau, French—aqua, Latin.

Page 725

*'Canal, and Viaduct, and Railway, tell'*

At Corby, a few miles below Nunnery, the Eden is crossed by a magnificent viaduct; and another of these works is thrown over a deep glen or ravine at a very short distance from the main stream.

Page 725

*'A weight of awe, not easy to be borne.'*

The daughters of Long Meg, placed in a perfect circle eighty yards in diameter, are seventy-two in number above ground; a little way out of the circle stands Long Meg herself, a single stone, eighteen feet high. When I first saw this monument as I came on it by surprise, I might overrate its importance as an object; but, though it will not bear a comparison with Stonehenge, I must say, I have not seen any other relique of those dark ages which can pretend to rival it in singularity and dignity of appearance.

Page 726

*'To the Earl of Lonsdale.'*

This sonnet was written immediately after certain trials which took place at the Cumberland Assizes, when the Earl of Lonsdale, in consequence of repeated and long-continued attacks upon his character through the local press, had thought it right to prosecute the conductors and proprietors of three several journals. A verdict of libel was given in one case; and, in the others, the prosecutions were withdrawn, upon the individuals retracting and disavowing the charges, expressing regret that they had been made, and promising to abstain from the like in future.

## Page 739

*'From the most gentle creature nursed in fields.'*

This way of indicating the *name* of my lamented friend has been found fault with; perhaps rightly so; but I may say in justification of the double sense of the word, that similar allusions are not uncommon in epitaphs. One of the best in our language in verse I ever read, was upon a person who bore the name of Palmer; and the course of the thought, throughout, turned upon the Life of the Departed, considered as a pilgrimage. Nor can I think that the objection in the present case will have much force with any one who remembers Charles Lamb's beautiful sonnet addressed to his own name, and ending—

"No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle name!"

## Page 742

Walter Scott . . .	died Sept. 21, 1832
S. T. Coleridge . . .	" July 25, 1834
Charles Lamb . . .	" Dec. 27, 1834
Geo. Crabbe . . .	" Feb. 3, 1832
Felicia Hemans . . .	" May 16, 1835

## Page 749

*'Although 'tis fair,  
'Twill be another Yarrow.'*

These words were quoted to me from "Yarrow Unvisited" by Sir Walter Scott when I visited him at Abbotsford, a day or two before his departure for Italy; and the affecting condition in which he was when he looked upon Rome from the Janicular Mount, was reported to me by a lady who had the honour of conducting him thither.

## Page 751

*'His sepulchral verse.'*

If any English reader should be desirous of knowing how far I am justified in thus describing the epitaphs of Chiabrera, he will find translated specimens of them on pages 393-396.

## Page 753

*'Aquapendente.'*

It would be ungenerous not to advert to the religious movement that, since the composition of these verses in 1837, has made itself felt, more or less strongly, throughout the English Church;—a movement that takes, for its first principle, a devout deference to the voice of Christian antiquity. It is not my office to pass judgment on questions of theological detail; but my own repugnance to the spirit and system of Romanism has been so repeatedly and, I trust, feelingly expressed, that I shall not be suspected of a leaning that way, if I do not join in the grave charge, thrown out, perhaps in the heat of controversy, against the learned and pious men to whose labours I allude. I speak apart from controversy; but, with strong faith in the moral temper which would elevate the present by doing reverence to the past, I would draw cheerful auguries for the English Church from this movement, as likely to restore among us a tone of piety more earnest and real than that produced by the mere formalities of the understanding, refusing, in a degree which I cannot but lament, that its own temper and judgment shall be controlled by those of antiquity.

## Page 753

Within a couple of hours of my arrival at Rome, I saw from Monte Pincio the Pine tree as described in the Sonnet; and, while expressing admiration at the beauty of its appearance, I was told by an acquaintance of my fellow-traveller, who happened to join us at the moment, that a price had been paid for it by the late Sir G. Beaumont, upon condition that the proprietor should not act upon his known intention of cutting it down.

## Page 758

*'Camaldoli.'*

This famous sanctuary was the original establishment of Saint Romualdo, (or Rumwald, as our ancestors Saxonised the name) in the 11th century, the ground

(campo) being given by Count Maldo. The Camaldolensi, however, have spread wide as a branch of Benedictines, and may therefore be classed among the *gentlemen* of the monastic orders. The society comprehends two orders, monks and hermits; symbolised by their arms, two doves drinking out of the same cup. The monastery in which the monks here reside is beautifully situated, but a large unattractive edifice, not unlike a factory. The hermitage is placed in a loftier and wider region of the forest. It comprehends between twenty and thirty distinct residences, each including for its single hermit an inclosed piece of ground and three very small apartments. There are days of indulgence when the hermit may quit his cell, and when old age arrives he descends from the mountain and takes his abode among the monks.

My companion had in the year 1831 fallen in with the monk, the subject of these two sonnets, who showed him his abode among the hermits. It is from him that I received the following particulars. He was then about forty years of age, but his appearance was that of an older man. He had been a painter by profession, but on taking orders changed his name from Santi to Raffaello, perhaps with an unconscious reference as well to the great Sanzio d'Urbino as to the archangel. He assured my friend that he had been thirteen years in the hermitage and had never known melancholy or ennui. In the little recess for study and prayer, there was a small collection of books. "I read only," said he, "books of asceticism and mystical theology." On being asked the names of the most famous mystics, he enumerated *Scaramelli*, *San Giovanni della Croce*, *St. Dionysius the Areopagite* (supposing the work which bears his name to be really his), and with peculiar emphasis *Ricardo di San Vittori*. The works of *Saint Theresa* are also in high repute among ascetics. These names may interest some of my readers.

We heard that Raffaello was then living in the convent; my friend sought in vain to renew his acquaintance with him. It was probably a day of seclusion. The reader will perceive that these sonnets were supposed to be written when he was a young man.

## Page 758

'What aim had they, the Pair of Monks.'

In justice to the Benedictines of Camaldoli, by whom strangers are so hospitably entertained, I feel obliged to notice that I saw among them no other figures at all resembling, in size and complexion, the two monks described in this Sonnet. What was their office, or the motive which brought them to this place of mortification, which they could not have approached without being carried in this or some other way, or feeling of delicacy prevented me from inquiring. An account has before been given of the hermitage they were about to enter. It was visited by us towards the end of the month of May; yet snow was lying thick under the pine-trees, within a few yards of the gate.

## Page 759

'At Vallombrosa.'

The name of Milton is pleasingly connected with Vallombrosa in many ways. The pride with which the monk, without any previous question from me, pointed out his residence, I shall not readily forget. It may be proper here to defend the Poet from a charge which has been brought against him, in respect to the passage in "Paradise Lost," where this place is mentioned. It is said, that he has erred in speaking of the trees there being deciduous, whereas they are, in fact, pines. The fault-finders are themselves mistaken; the *natural* woods of the region of Vallombrosa are deciduous, and spread to a great extent; those near the convent are, indeed, mostly pines; but they are avenues of trees *planted* within a few steps of each other, and thus composing large tracts of wood; plots of which are periodically cut down. The appearance of those narrow avenues, upon steep slopes open to the sky, on account of the height which the trees attain by being *forced* to grow upwards, is often very impressive. My guide, a boy of about fourteen years old, pointed this out to me in several places.

## Page 766

'All change is perilous, and all chance unsound.'

SPENSER.

## Page 776

*'Men of the Western World.'*

These lines were written several years ago, when reports prevailed of cruelties committed in many parts of America, by men making a law of their own passions. A far more formidable, as being a more deliberate mischief, has appeared among those States, which have lately broken faith with the public creditor in a manner so infamous. I cannot, however, but look at both evils under a similar relation to inherent good, and hope that the time is not distant when our brethren of the West will wipe off this stain from their name and nation.

## ADDITIONAL NOTE

I am happy to add that this anticipation is already partly realised; and that the reproach addressed to the Pennsylvanians in the sonnet on page 790 is no longer applicable to them. I trust that those other States to which it may yet apply will soon follow the example now set them by Philadelphia, and redeem their credit with the world.—1850.

## Page 779

*'The Norman boy.'*

"Among ancient Trees there are few, I believe, at least in France, so worthy of attention as an Oak which may be seen in the 'Pays de Caux,' about a league from Yvetot, close to the church, and in the burial-ground of Allonville.

"The height of this Tree does not answer to its girth; the trunk, from the roots to the summit, forms a complete cone; and the inside of this cone is hollow throughout the whole of its height.

"Such is the Oak of Allonville in its state of nature. The hand of Man, however, has endeavoured to impress upon it a character still more interesting, by adding a religious feeling to the respect which its age naturally inspires.

"The lower part of its hollow trunk has been transformed into a Chapel of six or seven feet in diameter, carefully wainscoted and paved, and an open iron gate guards the humble Sanctuary.

"Leading to it there is a staircase, which twists round the body of the Tree. At certain seasons of the year divine service is performed in this Chapel.

"The summit has been broken off many years, but there is a surface at the top of the trunk, of the diameter of a very large tree, and from it rises a pointed roof, covered with slates, in the form of a steeple, which is surmounted with an iron Cross, that rises in a picturesque manner from the middle of the leaves, like an ancient Hermitage above the surrounding Wood.

"Over the entrance to the Chapel an Inscription appears, which informs us it was erected by the Abbé du Détroit, Curate of Allonville in the year 1696; and over a door is another, dedicating it 'To Our Lady of Peace.'"

*Vide 14 No. Saturday Magazine.*



# APPENDIX, PREFACES,

ETC. ETC

MUCH the greatest part of the foregoing Poems has been so long before the Public that no prefatory matter, explanatory of any portion of them or of the arrangement which has been adopted, appears to be required; and had it not been for the observations contained in those Prefaces upon the principles of Poetry in general, they would not have been reprinted even as an Appendix in this Edition.

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## PREFACE

TO THE SECOND EDITION OF SEVERAL OF  
THE FOREGOING POEMS, PUBLISHED,  
WITH AN ADDITIONAL VOLUME, UNDER  
THE TITLE OF "LYRICAL BALLADS"

*Note.*—In succeeding Editions, when the Collection was much enlarged and diversified, this Preface was transferred to the end of the Volumes as having little of a special application to their contents.

The first Volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published as an experiment, which, I hoped, might be of some use to ascertain how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavour to impart.

I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of those Poems: I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure: and, on the

other hand, I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them they would be read with more than common dislike. The result has differed from my expectation in this only, that a greater number have been pleased than I ventured to hope I should please.

\* \* \* \*

Several of my Friends are anxious for the success of these Poems, from a belief that, if the views with which they were composed were indeed realised, a class of Poetry would be produced, well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the quality and in the multiplicity of its moral relations: and on this account they have advised me to prefix a systematic defence of the theory upon which the Poems were written. But I was unwilling to undertake the task, knowing that on this occasion the Reader would look coldly upon my arguments, since I might be suspected of having been principally influenced by the selfish and foolish hope of *reasoning* him into an approbation of these particular Poems: and I was still more unwilling to undertake the task, because adequately to display the opinions, and fully to enforce the arguments, would require a space wholly disproportionate to a preface. For, to treat the subject with the clearness and coherence of which it is susceptible, it would be necessary to give a full account of the present state of the public taste in this country, and to determine how far this taste is healthy or depraved; which, again, could not be determined without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other, and without retracing the



revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself. I have therefore altogether declined to enter regularly upon this defence; yet I am sensible that there would be something like impropriety in abruptly obtruding upon the Public, without a few words of introduction, Poems so materially different from those upon which general approbation is at present bestowed.

It is supposed that by the act of writing in verse an Author makes a formal engagement that he will gratify certain known habits of association; that he not only thus apprises the Reader that certain classes of ideas and expressions will be found in his book, but that others will be carefully excluded. This exponent or symbol held forth by metrical language must in different eras of literature have excited very different expectations: for example, in the age of Catullus, Terence, and Lucretius, and that of Statius or Claudian; and in our own country, in the age of Shakspeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and that of Donne and Cowley, or Dryden, or Pope. I will not take upon me to determine the exact import of the promise which, by the act of writing in verse, an Author in the present day makes to his reader; but it will undoubtedly appear to many persons that I have not fulfilled the terms of an engagement thus voluntarily contracted. They who have been accustomed to the gaudiness and inane phraseology of many modern writers, if they persist in reading this book to its conclusion, will, no doubt, frequently have to struggle with feelings of strangeness and awkwardness: they will look round for poetry, and will be induced to inquire by what species of courtesy these attempts can be permitted to assume that title. I hope, therefore, the reader will not censure me for attempting to state what I have proposed to myself to perform; and also (as far as the limits of a preface will permit) to explain some of the chief reasons which have determined me in the choice of my purpose: that at least he may be spared any unpleasant feeling of disappointment, and that I myself may be protected from one of the most dishonourable accusations which can be brought against an Author; namely, that of an indolence which prevents him from endeavouring to ascertain what is his

duty, or, when his duty is ascertained, prevents him from performing it.

The principal object, then, proposed in these Poems, was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect; and further, and above all, to make these incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly, as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings co-exist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings, and, from the necessary character of rural occupations, are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and, lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature. The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust), because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercourse, being less under the influence of social vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions. Accordingly, such a language, arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art

in proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes and fickle appetites of their own creation.<sup>1</sup>

I cannot, however, be insensible to the present outcry against the triviality and meanness, both of thought and language, which some of my contemporaries have occasionally introduced into their metrical compositions; and I acknowledge that this defect, where it exists, is more dishonourable to the Writer's own character than false refinement or arbitrary innovation, though I should contend at the same time that it is far less pernicious in the sum of its consequences. From such verses the Poems in these volumes will be found distinguished at least by one mark of difference, that each of them has a worthy *purpose*. Not that I always began to write with a distinct purpose formally conceived, but habits of meditation have, I trust, so prompted and regulated my feelings, that my descriptions of such objects as strongly excite those feelings will be found to carry along with them a *purpose*. If this opinion be erroneous, I can have little right to the name of a Poet. For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: and though this be true, Poems to which any value can be attached were never produced on any variety of subjects but by a man who, being possessed of more than usual organic sensibility, had also thought long and deeply. For our continued influxes of feeling are modified and directed by our thoughts, which are indeed the representatives of all our past feelings; and as, by contemplating the relation of these general representatives to each other, we discover what is really important to men, so, by the repetition and continuance of this act, our feelings will be connected with important subjects, till at length, if we be originally possessed of much sensibility, such habits of mind will be produced that, by obeying blindly and mechanically the impulses of those habits, we shall

<sup>1</sup> It is worth while here to observe that the affecting parts of Chaucer are almost always expressed in language pure and universally intelligible even to this day.

describe objects, and utter sentiments, of such a nature, and in such connection with each other, that the understanding of the Reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified.

It has been said that each of these Poems has a purpose. Another circumstance must be mentioned which distinguishes these Poems from the popular Poetry of the day; it is this, that the feeling therein developed gives importance to the action and situation, and not the action and situation to the feeling.

A sense of false modesty shall not prevent me from asserting that the Reader's attention is pointed to this mark of distinction, far less for the sake of these particular Poems than from the general importance of the subject. The subject is indeed important! For the human mind is capable of being excited without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know, that one being is elevated above another in proportion as he possesses this capability. It has therefore appeared to me, that to endeavour to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, at any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies. To this tendency of life and manners the literature and theatrical exhibitions of the country have conformed themselves. The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakspeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, and

deluges of idle and extravagant stories in verse.—When I think upon this degrading thirst after outrageous stimulation, I am almost ashamed to have spoken of the feeble endeavour made in these volumes to counteract it; and, reflecting upon the magnitude of the general evil, I should be oppressed with no dishonourable melancholy, had I not a deep impression of certain inherent and indestructible qualities of the human mind, and likewise of certain powers in the great and permanent objects that act upon it, which are equally inherent and indestructible; and were there not added to this impression a belief that the time is approaching when the evil will be systematically opposed by men of greater powers, and with far more distinguished success.

Having dwelt thus long on the subjects and aim of these Poems, I shall request the Reader's permission to apprise him of a few circumstances relating to their *style*, in order, among other reasons, that he may not censure me for not having performed what I never attempted. The Reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas rarely occur in these volumes, and are utterly rejected as an ordinary device to elevate the style and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language. They are, indeed, a figure of speech occasionally prompted by passion, and I have made use of them as such; but have endeavoured utterly to reject them as a mechanical device of style, or as a family language which Writers in metre seem to lay claim to by prescription. I have wished to keep the Reader in the company of flesh and blood, persuaded that by so doing I shall interest him. Others who pursue a different track will interest him likewise; I do not interfere with their claim, but wish to prefer a claim of my own. There will also be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it; this has been done for the reason already alleged, to bring my language near to the language of men; and further, because the pleasure which I have proposed to myself to impart

is of a kind very different from that which is supposed by many persons to be the proper object of poetry. Without being culpably particular, I do not know how to give my Reader a more exact notion of the style in which it was my wish and intention to write, than by informing him that I have at all times endeavoured to look steadily at my subject; consequently there is, I hope, in these Poems little falsehood of description, and my ideas are expressed in language fitted to their respective importance. Something must have been gained by this practice, as it is friendly to one property of all good poetry, namely, good sense: but it has necessarily cut me off from a large portion of phrases and figures of speech which from father to son have long been regarded as the common inheritance of Poets. I have also thought it expedient to restrict myself still further, having abstained from the use of many expressions, in themselves proper and beautiful, but which have been foolishly repeated by bad Poets, till such feelings of disgust are connected with them as it is scarcely possible by any art of association to overpower.

If in a poem there should be found a series of lines, or even a single line, in which the language, though naturally arranged, and according to the strict laws of metre, does not differ from that of prose, there is a numerous class of critics, who, when they stumble upon these prosaisms, as they call them, imagine that they have made a notable discovery, and exult over the Poet as over a man ignorant of his own profession. Now these men would establish a canon of criticism which the Reader will conclude he must utterly reject, if he wishes to be pleased with these volumes. And it would be a most easy task to prove to him that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of

Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose and Metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction.

"In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,  
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;  
The birds in vain their amorous descent join,  
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.  
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;  
*A different object do these eyes require;*  
*My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;*  
*And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;*  
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,  
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;  
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;  
To warm their little loves the birds complain.  
*I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,*  
*And weep the more because I weep in vain."*

It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious that, except in the rhyme and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.

By the foregoing quotation it has been shown that the language of Prose may yet be well adapted to Poetry; and it was previously asserted that a large portion of the language of every good poem can in no respect differ from that of good Prose. We will go further. It may be safely affirmed that there neither is, nor can be, any *essential* difference between the language of prose and metrical composition. We are fond of tracing the resemblance between Poetry and Painting, and, accordingly, we call them Sisters: but where shall we find bonds of connection sufficiently strict to typify the affinity betwixt metrical and prose composition? They both speak by and to the same organs; the bodies in which both of them are clothed may be said to be of the same substance, their affections are kindred, and almost identical, nor necessarily differing even in degree; Poetry<sup>1</sup> sheds no tears

<sup>1</sup> I here use the word "Poetry" (though against my own judgment) as opposed to the word Prose,

"such as Angels weep," but natural and human tears; she can boast of no celestial ichor that distinguishes her vital juices from those of Prose; the same human blood circulates through the veins of them both.

If it be affirmed that rhyme and metrical arrangement of themselves constitute a distinction which overturns what has just been said on the strict affinity of metrical language with that of Prose, and paves the way for other artificial distinctions which the mind voluntarily admits, I answer that the language of such Poetry as is here recommended is, as far as is possible, a selection of the language really spoken by men; that this selection, wherever it is made with true taste and feeling, will of itself form a distinction far greater than would at first be imagined, and will entirely separate the composition from the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life; and, if metre be superadded thereto, I believe that a dissimilitude will be produced altogether sufficient for the gratification of a rational mind. What other distinction would we have? Whence is it to come? And where is it to exist? Not, surely, where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters: it cannot be necessary here, either for elevation of style, or any of its supposed ornaments; for, if the Poet's subject be judiciously chosen, it will naturally, and upon fit occasion, lead him to passions, the language of which, if selected truly and judiciously, must necessarily be dignified and variegated, and alive with metaphors and figures. I forbear to speak of an incongruity which would shock the intelligent Reader, should the Poet interweave any foreign splendour of his own with that which the passion naturally suggests: it is sufficient to say that such addition is unnecessary. And, surely, it is more probable that those passages, which with propriety abound with

and synonymous with metrical composition. But much confusion has been introduced into criticism by this contradistinction of Poetry and Prose, instead of the more philosophical one of Poetry and Matter of Fact, or Science. The only strict antithesis to Prose is Metre; nor is this, in truth, a *strict* antithesis, because lines and passages of metre so naturally occur in writing prose, that it would be scarcely possible to avoid them, even were it desirable.

metaphors and figures, will have their due effect if, upon other occasions where the passions are of a milder character, the style also be subdued and temperate.

But, as the pleasure which I hope to give by the Poems now presented to the Reader must depend entirely on just notions upon this subject, and as it is in itself of high importance to our taste and moral feelings, I cannot content myself with these detached remarks. And if, in what I am about to say, it shall appear to some that my labour is unnecessary, and that I am like a man fighting a battle without enemies, such persons may be reminded that, whatever be the language outwardly holden by men, a practical faith in the opinions which I am wishing to establish is almost unknown. If my conclusions are admitted, and carried as far as they must be carried if admitted at all, our judgments concerning the works of the greatest Poets, both ancient and modern, will be far different from what they are at present, both when we praise and when we censure: and our moral feelings influencing and influenced by these judgments will, I believe, be corrected and purified.

Taking up the subject, then, upon general grounds, let me ask, what is meant by the word Poet? What is a Poet? To whom does he address himself? And what language is to be expected from him?—He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind; a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him; delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings-on of the Universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them. To these qualities he has added a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present; an ability of conjuring up in himself passions, which are indeed far from being the same as those produced by real events, yet (especially in those parts of the general sympathy which are pleasing and delightful)

do more nearly resemble the passions produced by real events than anything which, from the motions of their own minds merely, other men are accustomed to feel in themselves:—whence, and from practice, he has acquired a greater readiness and power in expressing what he thinks and feels, and especially those thoughts and feelings which, by his own choice, or from the structure of his own mind, arise in him without immediate external excitement.

But whatever portion of this faculty we may suppose even the greatest Poet to possess, there cannot be a doubt that the language which it will suggest to him must often, in liveliness and truth, fall short of that which is uttered by men in real life under the actual pressure of those passions, certain shadows of which the Poet thus produces, or feels to be produced, in himself.

However exalted a notion we would wish to cherish of the character of a Poet, it is obvious that, while he describes and imitates passions, his employment is in some degree mechanical compared with the freedom and power of real and substantial action and suffering. So that it will be the wish of the Poet to bring his feelings near to those of the persons whose feelings he describes, nay, for short spaces of time, perhaps, to let himself slip into an entire delusion, and even confound and identify his own feelings with theirs; modifying only the language which is thus suggested to him by a consideration that he describes for a particular purpose, that of giving pleasure. Here, then, he will apply the principle of selection which has been already insisted upon. He will depend upon this for removing what would otherwise be painful or disgusting in the passion; he will feel that there is no necessity to trick out or to elevate nature: and the more industriously he applies this principle the deeper will be his faith that no words, which *his* fancy or imagination can suggest, will be to be compared with those which are the emanations of reality and truth.

But it may be said by those who do not object to the general spirit of these remarks, that, as it is impossible for the Poet to produce upon all occasions language as exquisitely fitted for the passion as that which

the real passion itself suggests, it is proper that he should consider himself as in the situation of a translator, who does not scruple to substitute excellences of another kind for those which are unattainable by him; and endeavours occasionally to surpass his original, in order to make some amends for the general inferiority to which he feels that he must submit. But this would be to encourage idleness and unmanly despair. Further, it is the language of men who speak of what they do not understand; who talk of Poetry, as of a matter of amusement and idle pleasure; who will converse with us as gravely about a *taste* for Poetry, as they express it, as if it were a thing as indifferent as a taste for rope-dancing, or Frontinac or Sherry. Aristotle, I have been told, has said, that Poetry is the most philosophic of all writing: it is so: its object is truth, not individual and local, but general and operative; not standing upon external testimony, but carried alive into the heart by passion; truth which is its own testimony, which gives competence and confidence to the tribunal to which it appeals, and receives them from the same tribunal. Poetry is the image of man and nature. The obstacles which stand in the way of the fidelity of the Biographer and Historian, and of their consequent utility, are incalculably greater than those which are to be encountered by the Poet who comprehends the dignity of his art. The Poet writes under one restriction only, namely, the necessity of giving immediate pleasure to a human Being possessed of that information which may be expected from him, not as a lawyer, a physician, a mariner, an astronomer, or a natural philosopher, but as a Man. Except this one restriction, there is no object standing between the Poet and the image of things; between this, and the Biographer and Historian, there are a thousand.

Nor let this necessity of producing immediate pleasure be considered as a degradation of the Poet's art. It is far otherwise. It is an acknowledgment of the beauty of the universe, an acknowledgment the more sincere because not formal, but indirect; it is a task light and easy to him who looks at the world in the spirit of love: further, it is a homage paid to the native

and naked dignity of man, to the grand elementary principle of pleasure, by which he knows, and feels, and lives, and moves. We have no sympathy but what is propagated by pleasure: I would not be misunderstood; but wherever we sympathise with pain, it will be found that the sympathy is produced and carried on by subtle combinations with pleasure. We have no knowledge, that is, no general principles drawn from the contemplation of particular facts, but what has been built up by pleasure, and exists in us by pleasure alone. The Man of science, the Chemist and Mathematician, whatever difficulties and disgusts they may have had to struggle with, know and feel this. However painful may be the objects with which the Anatomist's knowledge is connected, he feels that his knowledge is pleasure; and where he has no pleasure he has no knowledge. What then does the Poet? He considers man and the objects that surround him as acting and re-acting upon each other, so as to produce an infinite complexity of pain and pleasure; he considers man in his own nature and in his ordinary life as contemplating this with a certain quantity of immediate knowledge, with certain convictions, intuitions, and deductions, which from habit acquire the quality of intuitions; he considers him as looking upon this complex scene of ideas and sensations, and finding everywhere objects that immediately excite in him sympathies which, from the necessities of his nature, are accompanied by an overbalance of enjoyment.

To this knowledge which all men carry about with them, and to these sympathies in which, without any other discipline than that of our daily life, we are fitted to take delight, the Poet principally directs his attention. He considers man and nature as essentially adapted to each other, and the mind of man as naturally the mirror of the fairest and most interesting properties of nature. And thus the Poet, prompted by this feeling of pleasure, which accompanies him through the whole course of his studies, converses with general nature, with affections akin to those which, through labour and length of time, the Man of science has raised up in himself, by conversing with those particular parts of nature

which are the objects of his studies. The knowledge both of the Poet and the Man of science is pleasure; but the knowledge of the one cleaves to us as a necessary part of our existence, our natural and unalienable inheritance; the other is a personal and individual acquisition, slow to come to us, and by no habitual and direct sympathy connecting us with our fellow-beings. The Man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science. Emphatically may it be said of the Poet, as Shakspeare hath said of man, "that he looks before and after." He is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of difference of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs: in spite of things silently gone out of mind, and things violently destroyed; the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth and over all time. The objects of the Poet's thoughts are everywhere; though the eyes and senses of man are, it is true, his favourite guides, yet he will follow wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge—it is as immortal as the heart of man. If the labours of Men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the Poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us,

and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarised to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the Being thus produced as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man.—It is not, then, to be supposed that any one, who holds that sublime notion of Poetry which I have attempted to convey, will break in upon the sanctity and truth of his pictures by transitory and accidental ornaments, and endeavour to excite admiration of himself by arts, the necessity of which must manifestly depend upon the assumed meanness of his subject.

What has been thus far said applies to Poetry in general, but especially to those parts of compositions where the Poet speaks through the mouths of his characters; and upon this point it appears to authorise the conclusion that there are few persons of good sense who would not allow that the dramatic parts of composition are defective in proportion as they deviate from the real language of nature, and are coloured by a diction of the Poet's own, either peculiar to him as an individual Poet or belonging simply to Poets in general; to a body of men who, from the circumstance of their compositions being in metre, it is expected will employ a particular language.

It is not, then, in the dramatic parts of composition that we look for this distinction of language; but still it may be proper and necessary where the Poet speaks to us in his own person and character. To this I answer by referring the Reader to the description before given of a Poet. Among the qualities there enumerated as principally conducing to form a Poet, is implied nothing differing in kind from other men, but only in degree. The sum of what was said is, that the Poet is chiefly distinguished from other men by a greater promptness to think and feel without immediate external excitement, and a greater power in expressing such thoughts and feelings as are produced in him in that manner. But these passions

and thoughts and feelings are the general passions and thoughts and feelings of men. And with what are they connected? Undoubtedly with our moral sentiments and animal sensations, and with the causes which excite these; with the operations of the elements, and the appearances of the visible universe; with storm and sunshine, with the revolutions of the seasons, with cold and heat, with loss of friends and kindred, with injuries and resentments, gratitude and hope, with fear and sorrow. These, and the like, are the sensations and objects which the Poet describes, as they are the sensations of other men and the objects which interest them. The Poet thinks and feels in the spirit of human passions. How, then, can his language differ in any material degree from that of all other men who feel vividly and see clearly? It might be *proved* that it is impossible. But supposing that this were not the case, the Poet might then be allowed to use a peculiar language when expressing his feelings for his own gratification, or that of men like himself. But Poets do not write for Poets alone, but for men. Unless, therefore, we are advocates for that admiration which subsists upon ignorance, and that pleasure which arises from hearing what we do not understand, the Poet must descend from this supposed height; and, in order to excite rational sympathy, he must express himself as other men express themselves. To this it may be added, that while he is only selecting from the real language of men, or, which amounts to the same thing, composing accurately in the spirit of such selection, he is treading upon safe ground, and we know what we are to expect from him. Our feelings are the same with respect to metre; for, as it may be proper to remind the Reader, the distinction of metre is regular and uniform, and not, like that which is produced by what is usually called POETIC DICTION, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices, upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case, the Reader is utterly at the mercy of the Poet, respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion; whereas, in the other, the metre obeys certain laws, to which the Poet and Reader

both willingly submit because they are certain, and because no interference is made by them with the passion but such as the concurring testimony of ages has shown to heighten and improve the pleasure which co-exists with it.

It will now be proper to answer an obvious question, namely, Why, professing these opinions, have I written in verse? To this, in addition to such answer as is included in what has been already said, I reply, in the first place, Because, however I may have restricted myself, there is still left open to me what confessedly constitutes the most valuable object of all writing, whether in prose or verse; the great and universal passions of men, the most general and interesting of their occupations, and the entire world of nature before me—to supply endless combinations of forms and imagery. Now, supposing for a moment that whatever is interesting in these objects may be as vividly described in prose, why should I be condemned for attempting to superadd to such description the charm which, by the consent of all nations, is acknowledged to exist in metrical language? To this, by such as are yet unconvinced, it may be answered that a very small part of the pleasure given by Poetry depends upon the metre, and that it is injudicious to write in metre, unless it be accompanied with the other artificial distinctions of style with which metre is usually accompanied, and that, by such deviation, more will be lost from the shock which will thereby be given to the Reader's associations than will be counterbalanced by any pleasure which he can derive from the general power of numbers. In answer to those who still contend for the necessity of accompanying metre with certain appropriate colours of style in order to the accomplishment of its appropriate end, and who also, in my opinion, greatly under-rate the power of metre in itself, it might, perhaps, as far as relates to these Volumes, have been almost sufficient to observe, that poems are extant, written upon more humble subjects, and in a still more naked and simple style, which have continued to give pleasure from generation to generation. Now, if nakedness and simplicity be a defect, the fact here mentioned affords a strong presumption



that poems somewhat less naked and simple are capable of affording pleasure at the present day; and, what I wished *chiefly* to attempt, at present, was to justify myself for having written under the impression of this belief.

But various causes might be pointed out why, when the style is manly, and the subject of some importance, words metrically arranged will long continue to impart such a pleasure to mankind as he who proves the extent of that pleasure will be desirous to impart. The end of poetry is to produce excitement in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure; but, by the supposition, excitement is an unusual and irregular state of the mind; ideas and feelings do not, in that state, succeed each other in accustomed order. If the words, however, by which this excitement is produced be in themselves powerful, or the images and feelings have an undue proportion of pain connected with them, there is some danger that the excitement may be carried beyond its proper bounds. Now the co-presence of something regular, something to which the mind has been accustomed in various moods and in a less excited state, cannot but have great efficacy in tempering and restraining the passion by an intertexture of ordinary feeling, and of feeling not strictly and necessarily connected with the passion. This is unquestionably true; and hence, though the opinion will at first appear paradoxical, from the tendency of metre to divest language, in a certain degree, of its reality, and thus to throw a sort of half-consciousness of unsubstantial existence over the whole composition, there can be little doubt but that more pathetic situations and sentiments, that is, those which have a greater proportion of pain connected with them, may be endured in metrical composition, especially in rhyme, than in prose. The metre of the old ballads is very artless, yet they contain many passages which would illustrate this opinion; and, I hope, if the following poems be attentively perused, similar instances will be found in them. This opinion may be further illustrated by appealing to the Reader's own experience of the reluctance with which he comes to the reperusal of

the distressful parts of "*Clarissa Harlowe*," or the "*Gamester*"; while Shakspeare's writings, in the most pathetic scenes, never act upon us, as pathetic, beyond the bounds of pleasure—an effect which, in a much greater degree than might at first be imagined, is to be ascribed to small, but continual and regular impulses of pleasurable surprise from the metrical arrangement.—On the other hand (what it must be allowed will much more frequently happen), if the Poet's words should be incommensurate with the passion, and inadequate to raise the Reader to a height of desirable excitement, then (unless the Poet's choice of his metre has been grossly injudicious), in the feelings of pleasure which the Reader has been accustomed to connect with metre in general, and in the feeling, whether cheerful or melancholy, which he has been accustomed to connect with that particular movement of metre, there will be found something which will greatly contribute to impart passion to the words, and to effect the complex end which the Poet proposes to himself.

If I had undertaken a SYSTEMATIC defence of the theory here maintained, it would have been my duty to develop the various causes upon which the pleasure received from metrical language depends. Among the chief of these causes is to be reckoned a principle which must be well known to those who have made any of the Arts the object of accurate reflection; namely, the pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude. This principle is the great spring of the activity of our minds, and their chief feeder. From this principle the direction of the sexual appetite, and all the passions connected with it, take their origin: it is the life of our ordinary conversation; and upon the accuracy with which similitude in dissimilitude, and dissimilitude in similitude, are perceived, depend our taste and our moral feelings. It would not be a useless employment to apply this principle to the consideration of metre, and to show that metre is hence enabled to afford much pleasure, and to point out in what manner that pleasure is produced. But my limits will not permit me to enter upon this subject,

and I must content myself with a general summary.

I have said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity; the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of re-action, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind. In this mood successful composition generally begins, and in a mood similar to this it is carried on; but the emotion, of whatever kind, and in whatever degree, from various causes, is qualified by various pleasures, so that in describing any passions whatsoever, which are voluntarily described, the mind will, upon the whole, be in a state of enjoyment. If Nature be thus cautious to preserve in a state of enjoyment a being so employed, the Poet ought to profit by the lesson held forth to him, and ought especially to take care that, whatever passions he communicates to his Reader, those passions, if his Reader's mind be sound and vigorous, should always be accompanied with an over-balance of pleasure. Now the music of harmonious metrical language, the sense of difficulty overcome, and the blind association of pleasure which has been previously received from works of rhyme or metre of the same or similar construction, an indistinct perception perpetually renewed of language closely resembling that of real life, and yet, in the circumstance of metre, differing from it so widely—all these imperceptibly make up a complex feeling of delight, which is of the most important use in tempering the painful feeling always found intermingled with powerful descriptions of the deeper passions. This effect is always produced in pathetic and impassioned poetry; while, in lighter compositions, the ease and gracefulness with which the Poet manages his numbers are themselves confessedly a principal source of the gratification of the Reader. All that it is *necessary* to say, however, upon this subject, may be effected by affirming, what few persons will deny, that of two descriptions, either of passions, manners, or characters, each of them equally well executed, the one in prose and

the other in verse, the verse will be read a hundred times where the prose is read once.

Having thus explained a few of my reasons for writing in verse, and why I have chosen subjects from common life, and endeavoured to bring my language near to the real language of men, if I have been too minute in pleading my own cause, I have at the same time been treating a subject of general interest; and for this reason a few words shall be added with reference solely to these particular poems, and to some defects which will probably be found in them. I am sensible that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, I may have sometimes written upon unworthy subjects; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt that, in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my Readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men; for where the understanding of an author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself: for his own feelings are his stay and support; and, if he set them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind shall lose all confidence in itself, and become utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the critic ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the Poet, and, perhaps, in a much greater degree: for there can be no presumption in saying of most readers, that it is not probable they will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other; and, above

all, since they are so much less interested in the subject, they may decide lightly and carelessly.

Long as the reader has been detained, I hope he will permit me to caution him against a mode of false criticism which has been applied to poetry, in which the language closely resembles that of life and nature. Such verses have been triumphed over in parodies, of which Dr. Johnson's stanza is a fair specimen :—

"I put my hat upon my head  
And walked into the Strand,  
And there I met another Man  
Whose hat was in his hand."

Immediately under these lines let us place one of the most justly-admired stanzas of the *Babes in the Wood*.

"These pretty Babes with hand in hand  
Went wandering up and down;  
But never more they saw the Man  
Approaching from the Town."

In both these stanzas the words, and the order of the words, in no respect differ from the most unimpassioned conversation. There are words in both, for example, "the Strand," and "the Town," connected with none but the most familiar ideas; yet the one stanza we admit as admirable, and the other as a fair example of the superlatively contemptible. Whence arises this difference? Not from the metre, not from the language, not from the order of the words; but the *matter* expressed in Dr. Johnson's stanza is contemptible. The proper method of treating trivial and simple verses, to which Dr. Johnson's stanza would be a fair parallelism, is not to say, this is a bad kind of poetry, or, this is not poetry; but, this wants sense; it is neither interesting in itself, nor can *lead* to anything interesting; the images neither originate in that sane state of feeling which arises out of thought, nor can excite thought or feeling in the Reader. This is the only sensible manner of dealing with such verses. Why trouble yourself about the species till you have previously decided upon the genus? Why take pains to prove that an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man?

One request I must make of my Reader, which is, that in judging these Poems he would decide by his own feelings genuinely, and not by reflection upon what will probably be the judgment of others. How common is it to hear a person say, I myself do not object to this style of composition, or this or that expression, but to such and such classes of people it will appear mean or ludicrous! This mode of criticism, so destructive of all sound unadulterated judgment, is almost universal: let the Reader then abide, independently, by his own feelings, and, if he finds himself affected, let him not suffer such conjectures to interfere with his pleasure.

If an Author, by any single composition, has impressed us with respect for his talents, it is useful to consider this as affording a presumption that on other occasions where we have been displeased he, nevertheless, may not have written ill or absurdly; and further, to give him so much credit for this one composition as may induce us to review what has displeased us with more care than we should otherwise have bestowed upon it. This is not only an act of justice, but, in our decisions upon poetry especially, may conduce, in a high degree, to the improvement of our own taste: for an *accurate* taste in poetry, and in all the other arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed, is an *acquired* talent, which can only be produced by thought and a long-continued intercourse with the best models of composition. This is mentioned, not with so ridiculous a purpose as to prevent the most inexperienced Reader from judging for himself (I have already said that I wish him to judge for himself), but merely to temper the rashness of decision, and to suggest that, if Poetry be a subject on which much time has not been bestowed, the judgment may be erroneous; and that, in many cases, it necessarily will be so.

Nothing would, I know, have so effectually contributed to further the end which I have in view, as to have shown of what kind the pleasure is, and how that pleasure is produced, which is confessedly produced by metrical composition essentially different from that which I have here endeavoured to recommend: for the Reader will say that

he has been pleased by such composition; and what more can be done for him? The power of any art is limited; and he will suspect that, if it be proposed to furnish him with new friends, that can be only upon condition of his abandoning his old friends. Besides, as I have said, the Reader is himself conscious of the pleasure which he has received from such composition, composition to which he has peculiarly attached the endearing name of Poetry; and all men feel an habitual gratitude, and something of an honourable bigotry, for the objects which have long continued to please them: we not only wish to be pleased, but to be pleased in that particular way in which we have been accustomed to be pleased. There is in these feelings enough to resist a host of arguments; and I should be the less able to combat them successfully, as I am willing to allow that, in order entirely to enjoy the Poetry which I am recommending, it would be necessary to give up much of what is ordinarily enjoyed. But would my limits have permitted me to point out how this pleasure is produced, many obstacles might have been removed, and the Reader assisted in perceiving that the powers of language are not so limited as he may suppose; and that it is possible for poetry to give other enjoyments, of a purer, more lasting, and more exquisite nature. This part of the subject has not been altogether neglected, but it has not been so much my present aim to prove, that the interest excited by some other kinds of poetry is less vivid, and less worthy of the nobler powers of the mind, as to offer reasons for presuming that if my purpose were fulfilled, a species of poetry would be produced which is genuine poetry; in its nature well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and likewise important in the multiplicity and quality of its moral relations.

From what has been said, and from a perusal of the Poems, the Reader will be able clearly to perceive the object which I had in view: he will determine how far it has been attained, and, what is a much more important question, whether it be worth attaining: and upon the decision of these two questions will rest my claim to the approbation of the Public.

## APPENDIX

See page 857—"by what is usually called POETIC DICTION."

PERHAPS, as I have no right to expect that attentive perusal, without which, confined, as I have been, to the narrow limits of a preface, my meaning cannot be thoroughly understood, I am anxious to give an exact notion of the sense in which the phrase poetic diction has been used; and for this purpose, a few words shall here be added, concerning the origin and characteristics of the phraseology which I have condemned under that name.

The earliest poets of all nations generally wrote from passion excited by real events; they wrote naturally, and as men: feeling powerfully as they did, their language was daring, and figurative. In succeeding times, Poets, and Men ambitious of the fame of Poets, perceiving the influence of such language, and desirous of producing the same effect without being animated by the same passion, set themselves to a mechanical adoption of these figures of speech, and made use of them, sometimes with propriety, but much more frequently applied them to feelings and thoughts with which they had no natural connection whatsoever. A language was thus insensibly produced, differing materially from the real language of men in *any situation*. The Reader or Hearer of this distorted language found himself in a perturbed and unusual state of mind: when affected by the genuine language of passion he had been in a perturbed and unusual state of mind also: in both cases he was willing that his common judgment and understanding should be laid asleep, and he had no instinctive and infallible perception of the true to make him reject the false; the one served as a passport for the other. The emotion was in both cases delightful, and no wonder if he confounded the one with the other, and believed them both to be produced by the same or similar causes. Besides, the Poet spake to him in the character of a man to be looked up to, a man of genius and authority. Thus, and from a variety of other causes, this distorted language was received with

admiration; and Poets, it is probable, who had before contented themselves for the most part with misapplying only expressions which at first had been dictated by real passion, carried the abuse still further, and introduced phrases composed apparently in the spirit of the original figurative language of passion, yet altogether of their own invention, and characterised by various degrees of wanton deviation from good sense and nature.

It is indeed true that the language of the earliest Poets was felt to differ materially from ordinary language, because it was the language of extraordinary occasions; but it was really spoken by men, language which the Poet himself had uttered when he had been affected by the events which he described, or which he had heard uttered by those around him. To this language it is probable that metre of some sort or other was early superadded. This separated the genuine language of Poetry still further from common life, so that whoever read or heard the poems of these earliest Poets felt himself moved in a way in which he had not been accustomed to be moved in real life, and by causes manifestly different from those which acted upon him in real life. This was the great temptation to all the corruptions which have followed: under the protection of this feeling succeeding Poets constructed a phraseology which had one thing, it is true, in common with the genuine language of poetry, namely, that it was not heard in ordinary conversation; that it was unusual. But the first Poets, as I have said, spake a language which, though unusual, was still the language of men. This circumstance, however, was disregarded by their successors; they found that they could please by easier means: they became proud of modes of expression which they themselves had invented, and which were uttered only by themselves. In process of time metre became a symbol or promise of this unusual language, and whoever took upon him to write in metre, according as he possessed more or less of true poetic genius, introduced less or more of this adulterated phraseology into his compositions, and the true and the false were inseparably interwoven until, the taste of men becoming

gradually perverted, this language was received as a natural language, and at length by the influence of books upon men, did to a certain degree really become so. Abuses of this kind were imported from one nation to another, and with the progress of refinement this diction became daily more and more corrupt, thrusting out of sight the plain humanities of nature by a motley masquerade of tricks, quaintnesses, hieroglyphics, and enigmas.

It would not be uninteresting to point out the causes of the pleasure given by this extravagant and absurd diction. It depends upon a great variety of causes, but upon none, perhaps, more than its influence in impressing a notion of the peculiarity and exaltation of the Poet's character, and in flattering the Reader's self-love by bringing him nearer to a sympathy with that character; an effect which is accomplished by unsettling ordinary habits of thinking, and thus assisting the Reader to approach to that perturbed and dizzy state of mind in which if he does not find himself, he imagines that he is *balhed* of a peculiar enjoyment which poetry can and ought to bestow.

The sonnet quoted from Gray in the Preface, except the lines printed in Italics, consists of little else but this diction, though not of the worst kind; and indeed, if one may be permitted to say so, it is far too common in the best writers, both ancient and modern. Perhaps in no way, by positive example, could more easily be given a notion of what I mean by the phrase *poetic diction* than by referring to a comparison between the metrical paraphrase which we have of passages in the Old and New Testament, and those passages as they exist in our common Translation. See Pope's "Messiah" throughout; Prior's "Did sweeter sounds adorn ray flowing tongue," etc. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," etc. 1st Corinthians, chap. xiii. By way of immediate example, take the following of Dr. Johnson:—

Turn on the prudent Ant thy heedless eyes,  
Observe her labours, Sluggard, and be wise;  
No stern command, no monitory voice,  
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice:  
Yet, timely provident, she hastes away

To snatch the blessings of a plenteous day ;  
 When fruitful Summer loads the teeming plain,  
 She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.  
 How long shall sloth usurp thy useless hours,  
 Unnerve thy vigour, and enchain thy powers ?  
 While artful shades thy downy couch enclose,  
 And soft solicitation courts repose,  
 Amidst the drowsy charms of dull delight,  
 Year chases year with unremitted flight,  
 Till Want now following, fraudulent and slow,  
 Shall spring to seize thee, like an ambush'd foe.

From this hubbub of words pass to the original. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard ; consider her ways, and be wise : which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard ? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep ? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep : so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." Proverbs, chap. vi.

One more quotation, and I have done. It is from Cowper's Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk :—

Religion ! what treasure untold  
 Resides in that heavenly word !  
 More precious than silver and gold,  
 Or all that this earth can afford.  
 But the sound of the church-going bell  
 These valleys and rocks never heard,  
 Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell,  
 Or smiled when a sabbath appeared.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport,  
 Convey to this desolate shore  
 Some cordial endearing report  
 Of a land I must visit no more.  
 My Friends, do they now and then send  
 A wish or a thought after me ?  
 O tell me I yet have a friend,  
 Though a friend I am never to see.

This passage is quoted as an instance of three different styles of composition. The first four lines are poorly expressed ; some Critics would call the language prosaic ; the fact is, it would be bad prose, so bad, that it is scarcely worse in metre. The epithet "church-going" applied to a bell, and that by so chaste a writer as Cowper, is an instance of the strange abuses which Poets have introduced into their language, till they and their Readers take them as

matters of course, if they do not single them out expressly as objects of admiration. The two lines "Ne'er sighed at the sound," etc., are, in my opinion, an instance of the language of passion wrested from its proper use, and, from the mere circumstance of the composition being in metre, applied upon an occasion that does not justify such violent expressions ; and I should condemn the passage, though perhaps few Readers will agree with me, as vicious poetic diction. The last stanza is throughout admirably expressed : it would be equally good whether in prose or verse, except that the Reader has an exquisite pleasure in seeing such natural language so naturally connected with metre. The beauty of this stanza tempts me to conclude with a principle which ought never to be lost sight of, and which has been my chief guide in all I have said,—namely, that in works of *imagination and sentiment*, for of these only have I been treating, in proportion as ideas and feelings are valuable, whether the composition be in prose or in verse, they require and exact one and the same language. Metre is but adventitious to composition, and the phraseology for which that passport is necessary, even where it may be graceful at all, will be little valued by the judicious.

## ESSAY, SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE PREFACE

WITH the young of both sexes, Poetry is, like love, a passion ; but, for much the greater part of those who have been proud of its power over their minds, a necessity soon arises of breaking the pleasing bondage ; or it relaxes of itself ;—the thoughts being occupied in domestic cares, or the time engrossed by business. Poetry then becomes only an occasional recreation, while to those whose existence passes away in a course of fashionable pleasure, it is a species of luxurious amusement. In middle and declining age, a scattered number of serious persons resort to poetry, as to religion, for a protection against the pressure of trivial employments, and as a consolation for the afflictions of life. And, lastly, there are many who, having been

enamoured of this art in their youth, have found leisure, after youth was spent, to cultivate general literature; in which poetry has continued to be comprehended *as a study*.

Into the above classes the Readers of poetry may be divided; Critics abound in them all; but from the last only can opinions be collected of absolute value, and worthy to be depended upon, as prophetic of the destiny of a new work. The young, who in nothing can escape delusion, are especially subject to it in their intercourse with Poetry. The cause, not so obvious as the fact is unquestionable, is the same as that from which erroneous judgments in this art, in the minds of men of all ages, chiefly proceed; but upon Youth it operates with peculiar force. The appropriate business of poetry (which, nevertheless, if genuine, is as permanent as pure science), her appropriate employment, her privilege and her *duty*, is to treat of things not as they *are*, but as they *appear*; not as they exist in themselves, but as they *seem* to exist to the *senses*, and to the *passions*. What a world of delusion does this acknowledged obligation prepare for the inexperienced! what temptations to go astray are here held forth for them whose thoughts have been little disciplined by the understanding, and whose feelings revolt from the sway of reason!—When a juvenile Reader is in the height of his rapture with some vicious passage, should experience throw in doubts, or common sense suggest suspicions, a lurking consciousness that the realities of the Muse are but shows, and that her liveliest excitements are raised by transient shocks of conflicting feeling and successive assemblages of contradictory thoughts—is ever at hand to justify extravagance, and to sanction absurdity. But, it may be asked, as these illusions are unavoidable, and, no doubt, eminently useful to the mind as a process, what good can be gained by making observations, the tendency of which is to diminish the confidence of youth in its feelings, and thus to abridge its innocent and even profitable pleasures? The reproach implied in the question could not be warded off, if Youth were incapable of being delighted with what is truly excellent; or if these errors always terminated of themselves

in due season. But, with the majority, though their force be abated, they continue through life. Moreover, the fire of youth is too vivacious an element to be extinguished or damped by a philosophical remark; and, while there is no danger that what has been said will be injurious or painful to the ardent and the confident, it may prove beneficial to those who, being enthusiastic, are, at the same time, modest and ingenuous. The intimation may unite with their own misgivings to regulate their sensibility, and to bring in, sooner than it would otherwise have arrived, a more discreet and sound judgment.

If it should excite wonder that men of ability, in later life, whose understandings have been rendered acute by practice in affairs, should be so easily and so far imposed upon when they happen to take up a new work in verse, this appears to be the cause;—that, having discontinued their attention to poetry, whatever progress may have been made in other departments of knowledge, they have not, as to this art, advanced in true discernment beyond the age of youth. If, then, a new poem fall in their way, whose attractions are of that kind which would have enraptured them during the heat of youth, the judgment not being improved to a degree that they shall be disgusted, they are dazzled; and prize and cherish the faults for having had power to make the present time vanish before them, and to throw the mind back, as by enchantment, into the happiest season of life. As they read, powers seem to be revived, passions are regenerated, and pleasures restored. The Book was probably taken up after an escape from the burden of business, and with a wish to forget the world, and all its vexations and anxieties. Having obtained this wish, and so much more, it is natural that they should make report as they have felt.

If Men of mature age, through want of practice, be thus easily beguiled into admiration of absurdities, extravagances, and misplaced ornaments, thinking it proper that their understandings should enjoy a holiday, while they are unbending their minds with verse, it may be expected that such Readers will resemble their former selves also in strength of prejudice, and an

inaptitude to be moved by the unostentatious beauties of a pure style. In the higher poetry, an enlightened Critic chiefly looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. Wherever these appear, simplicity accompanies them; Magnificence herself, when legitimate, depending upon a simplicity of her own, to regulate her ornaments. But it is a well-known property of human nature, that our estimates are ever governed by comparisons, of which we are conscious with various degrees of distinctness. Is it not, then, inevitable (confining these observations to the effects of style merely) that an eye, accustomed to the glaring hues of diction by which such Readers are caught and excited, will for the most part be rather repelled than attracted by an original Work, the colouring of which is disposed according to a pure and refined scheme of harmony? It is in the fine arts as in the affairs of life, no man can *serve* (*i.e.* obey with zeal and fidelity) two Masters.

As Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion, they who have learned to perceive this truth, and who betake themselves to reading verse for sacred purposes, must be preserved from numerous illusions to which the two Classes of Readers, whom we have been considering, are liable. But as the mind grows serious from the weight of life, the range of its passions is contracted accordingly; and its sympathies become so exclusive that many species of high excellence wholly escape, or but languidly excite, its notice. Besides, men who read from religious or moral inclinations, even when the subject is of that kind which they approve, are beset with misconceptions and mistakes peculiar to themselves. Attaching so much importance to the truths which interest them, they are prone to over-rate the Authors by whom those truths are expressed and enforced. They come prepared to impart so much passion to the Poet's language, that they remain unconscious how little, in fact, they received from it. And, on the other hand, religious faith is to him who holds it so momentous a thing, and error appears to be attended with such tremendous consequences, that, if opinions touching

upon religion occur which the Reader condemns, he not only cannot sympathise with them, however animated the expression, but there is, for the most part, an end put to all satisfaction and enjoyment. Love, if it before existed, is converted into dislike; and the heart of the Reader is set against the Author and his book.—To these excesses they, who from their professions ought to be the most guarded against them, are perhaps the most liable; I mean those sects whose religion, being from the calculating understanding, is cold and formal. For when Christianity, the religion of humility, is founded upon the proudest faculty of our nature, what can be expected but contradictions? Accordingly, believers of this cast are at one time contemptuous; at another, being troubled, as they are and must be, with inward misgivings, they are jealous and suspicious;—and at all seasons they are under temptations to supply, by the heat with which they defend their tenets, the animation which is wanting to the constitution of the religion itself.

Faith was given to man that his affections, detached from the treasures of time, might be inclined to settle upon those of eternity:—the elevation of his nature, which this habit produces on earth, being to him a presumptive evidence of a future state of existence, and giving him a title to partake of its holiness. The religious man values what he sees chiefly as an "imperfect shadowing forth" of what he is incapable of seeing. The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burthen upon words and symbols. The commerce between Man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the Infinite Being accommodates himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinity between religion and poetry; between religion—making up the deficiencies of reason by faith; and poetry—passionate for the instruction of reason; between religion—whose element is infinitude, and whose ultimate trust is the supreme of things, submitting herself to circumscription, and reconciled to substitutions; and poetry—ethereal and transcendent, yet incapable



to sustain her existence without sensuous incarnation. In this community of nature may be perceived also the lurking incitements of kindred error;—so that we shall find that no poetry has been more subject to distortion than that species, the argument and scope of which is religious; and no lovers of the art have gone farther astray than the pious and the devout.

Whither then shall we turn for that union of qualifications which must necessarily exist before the decisions of a critic can be of absolute value? For a mind at once poetical and philosophical; for a critic whose affections are as free and kindly as the spirit of society, and whose understanding is severe as that of dispassionate government? Where are we to look for that initiatory composure of mind which no selfishness can disturb? For a natural sensibility that has been tutored into correctness without losing anything of its quickness; and for active faculties, capable of answering the demands which an Author of original imagination shall make upon them, associated with a judgment that cannot be duped into admiration by aught that is unworthy of it?—among those and those only, who, never having suffered their youthful love of poetry to remit much of its force, have applied to the consideration of the laws of this art the best power of their understandings. At the same time it must be observed that, as this Class comprehends the only judgments which are trustworthy, so does it include the most erroneous and perverse. For to be mistaught is worse than to be untaught; and no perverseness equals that which is supported by system, no errors are so difficult to root out as those which the understanding has pledged its credit to uphold. In this Class are contained censors, who, if they be pleased with what is good, are pleased with it only by imperfect glimpses, and upon false principles; who, should they generalise rightly to a certain point, are sure to suffer for it in the end; who, if they stumble upon a sound rule, are fettered by misapplying it, or by straining it too far; being incapable of perceiving when it ought to yield to one of higher order. In it are found critics too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him; men,

who take upon them to report of the course which *he* holds whom they are utterly unable to accompany,—confounded if he turn quick upon the wing, dismayed if he soar steadily "into the region;"—men of palsied imaginations and indurated hearts; in whose minds all healthy action is languid, who therefore feed as the many direct them, or, with the many, are greedy after vicious provocatives;—judges, whose censure is auspicious, and whose praise ominous! In this class meet together the two extremes of best and worst.

The observations presented in the foregoing series are of too ungracious a nature to have been made without reluctance; and, were it only on this account, I would invite the reader to try them by the test of comprehensive experience. If the number of judges who can be confidently relied upon be in reality so small, it ought to follow that partial notice only, or neglect, perhaps long continued, or attention wholly inadequate to their merits, must have been the fate of most works in the higher departments of poetry; and that, on the other hand, numerous productions have blazed into popularity, and have passed away, leaving scarcely a trace behind them: it will be further found, that when Authors shall have at length raised themselves into general admiration and maintained their ground, errors and prejudices have prevailed concerning their genius and their works, which the few who are conscious of those errors and prejudices would deplore; if they were not recompensed by perceiving that there are select Spirits for whom it is ordained that their fame shall be in the world an existence like that of Virtue, which owes its being to the struggles it makes, and its vigour to the enemies whom it provokes;—a vivacious quality, ever doomed to meet with opposition, and still triumphing over it; and, from the nature of its dominion, incapable of being brought to the sad conclusion of Alexander, when he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer.

Let us take a hasty retrospect of the poetical literature of this Country for the greater part of the last two centuries, and see if the facts support these inferences.

Who is there that now reads the

"Creation" of Dubartas? Yet all Europe once resounded with his praise; he was caressed by kings; and, when his Poem was translated into our language, the Faery Queen faded before it. The name of Spenser, whose genius is of a higher order than even that of Ariosto, is at this day scarcely known beyond the limits of the British Isles. And if the value of his works is to be estimated from the attention now paid to them by his countrymen, compared with that which they bestow on those of some other writers, it must be pronounced small indeed.

"The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors  
And poets *sage*"—

are his own words; but his wisdom has, in this particular, been his worst enemy: while its opposite, whether in the shape of folly or madness, has been *their* best friend. But he was a great power, and bears a high name: the laurel has been awarded to him.

A dramatic Author, if he write for the stage, must adapt himself to the taste of the audience, or they will not endure him; accordingly the mighty genius of Shakspeare was listened to. The people were delighted; but I am not sufficiently versed in stage antiquities to determine whether they did not flock as eagerly to the representation of many pieces of contemporary Authors, wholly undeserving to appear upon the same boards. Had there been a formal contest for superiority among dramatic writers, that Shakspeare, like his predecessors Sophocles and Euripides, would have often been subject to the mortification of seeing the prize adjudged to sorry competitors, becomes too probable, when we reflect that the admirers of Settle and Shadwell were, in a later age, as numerous, and reckoned as respectable in point of talent, as those of Dryden. At all events, that Shakspeare stooped to accommodate himself to the People, is sufficiently apparent; and one of the most striking proofs of his almost omnipotent genius is, that he could turn to such glorious purpose those materials which the prepossessions of the age compelled him to make use of. Yet even this marvellous skill appears not to have been enough to prevent his rivals from having some advantage over him in

public estimation; else how can we account for passages and scenes that exist in his works, unless upon a supposition that some of the grossest of them, a fact which in my own mind I have no doubt of, were foisted in by the Players, for the gratification of the many?

But that his Works, whatever might be their reception upon the stage, made but little impression upon the ruling Intellects of the time, may be inferred from the fact that Lord Bacon, in his multifarious writings, nowhere either quotes or alludes to him.<sup>1</sup>—His dramatic excellence enabled him to resume possession of the stage after the Restoration; but Dryden tells us that in his time two of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were acted for one of Shakspeare's. And so faint and limited was the perception of the poetic beauties of his dramas in the time of Pope, that, in his Edition of the Plays, with a view of rendering to the general reader a necessary service, he printed between inverted commas those passages which he thought most worthy of notice.

At this day, the French Critics have abated nothing of their aversion to this darling of our Nation: "the English, with their bouffon de Shakspeare," is as familiar an expression among them as in the time of Voltaire. Baron Grimm is the only French writer who seems to have perceived his infinite superiority to the first names of the French Theatre; an advantage which the Parisian critic owed to his German blood and German education. The most enlightened Italians, though well acquainted with our language, are wholly incompetent to measure the proportions of Shakspeare. The Germans only, of foreign nations, are approaching towards a knowledge and feeling of what he is. In some respects they have acquired a superiority over the fellow-countrymen of the Poet: for among us it is a current, I might say an established opinion, that Shakspeare is justly praised

<sup>1</sup> The learned Hakewill (a third edition of whose book bears date 1635), writing to refute the error "touching Nature's perpetual and universal decay," cites triumphantly the names of Ariosto, Tasso, Barts, and Spenser, as instances that poetic genius had not degenerated; but he makes no mention of Shakspeare.

when he is pronounced to be "a wild irregular genius, in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties." How long may it be before this misconception passes away, and it becomes universally acknowledged that the judgment of Shakspeare in the selection of his materials, and in the manner in which he has made them, heterogeneous as they often are, constitute a unity of their own, and contribute all to one great end, is not less admirable than his imagination, his invention, and his intuitive knowledge of human Nature!

There is extant a small Volume of miscellaneous poems, in which Shakspeare expresses his own feelings in his own person. It is not difficult to conceive that the Editor, George Steevens, should have been insensible to the beauties of one portion of that Volume, the Sonnets; though in no part of the writings of this Poet is found, in an equal compass, a greater number of exquisite feelings felicitously expressed. But, from regard to the Critic's own credit, he would not have ventured to talk of an<sup>1</sup> act of parliament not being strong enough to compel the perusal of those little pieces, if he had not known that the people of England were ignorant of the treasures contained in them: and if he had not, moreover, shared the too common propensity of human nature to exult over a supposed fall into the mire of a genius whom he had been compelled to regard with admiration, as an inmate of the celestial regions—"there sitting where he durst not soar."

Nine years before the death of Shakspeare, Milton was born; and early in life he published several small poems, which, though on their first appearance they were praised by a few of the judicious, were afterwards neglected to that degree, that Pope in his youth could borrow from them without risk of its being known. Whether these poems are at this day justly appreciated, I will not undertake to decide: nor

<sup>1</sup> This flippant insensibility was publicly reprehended by Mr. Coleridge in a course of Lectures upon Poetry given by him at the Royal Institution. For the various merits of thought and language in Shakspeare's Sonnets see Numbers 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 54, 64, 66, 68, 73, 76, 86, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 113, 114, 116, 117, 129, and many others.

would it imply a severe reflection upon the mass of readers to suppose the contrary; seeing that a man of the acknowledged genius of Voss, the German poet, could suffer their spirit to evaporate; and could change their character, as is done in the translation made by him of the most popular of those pieces. At all events, it is certain that these Poems of Milton are now much read, and loudly praised; yet were they little heard of till more than 150 years after their publication; and of the Sonnets, Dr. Johnson, as appears from Boswell's Life of him, was in the habit of thinking and speaking as contemptuously as Steevens wrote upon those of Shakspeare.

About the time when the Pindaric odes of Cowley and his imitators, and the productions of that class of curious thinkers whom Dr. Johnson has strangely styled metaphysical Poets, were beginning to lose something of that extravagant admiration which they had excited, the *Paradise Lost* made its appearance. "Fit audience find though few," was the petition addressed by the Poet to his inspiring Muse. I have said elsewhere that he gained more than he asked; this I believe to be true; but Dr. Johnson has fallen into a gross mistake when he attempts to prove, by the sale of the work, that Milton's Countrymen were "just to it" upon its first appearance. Thirteen hundred Copies were sold in two years; an uncommon example, he asserts, of the prevalence of genius in opposition to so much recent enmity as Milton's public conduct had excited. But, be it remembered that, if Milton's political and religious opinions, and the manner in which he announced them, had raised him many enemies, they had procured him numerous friends; who, as all personal danger was passed away at the time of publication, would be eager to procure the master-work of a man whom they revered, and whom they would be proud of praising. Take, from the number of purchasers, persons of this class, and also those who wished to possess the Poem as a religious work, and but few, I fear, would be left who sought for it on account of its poetical merits. The demand did not immediately increase; "for," says Dr. Johnson, "many more readers" (he means persons in the habit of

reading poetry) "than were supplied at first the Nation did not afford." How careless must a writer be who can make this assertion in the face of so many existing title-pages to belie it! Turning to my own shelves, I find the folio of Cowley, seventh edition, 1681. A book near it is Flatman's *Poems*, fourth edition, 1686; Waller, fifth edition, same date. The *Poems* of Norris of Bemerton not long after went, I believe, through nine editions. What further demand there might be for these works I do not know; but I well remember that, twenty-five years ago, the booksellers' stalls in London swarmed with the folios of Cowley. This is not mentioned in disparagement of that able writer and amiable man; but merely to show that, if Milton's work were not more read, it was not because readers did not exist at the time. The early editions of the *Paradise Lost* were printed in a shape which allowed them to be sold at a low price, yet only three thousand copies of the Work were sold in eleven years; and the Nation, says Dr. Johnson, had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the Works of Shakspeare, which probably did not together make one thousand Copies; facts adduced by the critic to prove the "paucity of Readers."—There were readers in multitudes; but their money went for other purposes, as their admiration was fixed elsewhere. We are authorized, then, to affirm that the reception of the *Paradise Lost*, and the slow progress of its fame, are proofs as striking as can be desired that the positions which I am attempting to establish are not erroneous.<sup>1</sup>—How amusing to shape to one's self such a critique as a Wit of Charles's days, or a Lord of the *Miscellanies* or trading Journalist of King William's time, would have brought forth, if he had set his faculties industriously to work upon this Poem, everywhere impregnated with *original* excellence.

So strange indeed are the obliquities of

<sup>1</sup> Hughes is express upon this subject: in his dedication of Spenser's Works to Lord Somers, he writes thus: "It was your Lordship's encouraging a beautiful Edition of *Paradise Lost* that first brought that incomparable Poem to be generally known and esteemed."

admiration, that they whose opinions are much influenced by authority will often be tempted to think that there are no fixed principles<sup>2</sup> in human nature for this art to rest upon. I have been honoured by being permitted to peruse in MS. a tract composed between the period of the Revolution and the close of that century. It is the *Work of an English Peer* of high accomplishments, its object to form the character and direct the studies of his son. Perhaps nowhere does a more beautiful treatise of the kind exist. The good sense and wisdom of the thoughts, the delicacy of the feelings, and the charm of the style, are throughout equally conspicuous. Yet the Author, selecting among the Poets of his own country those whom he deems most worthy of his son's perusal, particularises only Lord Rochester, Sir John Denham, and Cowley. Writing about the same time, Shaftesbury, an author at present unjustly depreciated, describes the English Muses as only yet lisping in their cradles.

The arts by which Pope, soon afterwards, contrived to procure to himself a more general and a higher reputation than perhaps any English Poet ever attained during his life-time, are known to the judicious. And as well known is it to them, that the undue exertion of those arts is the cause why Pope has for some time held a rank in literature, to which, if he had not been seduced by an over-love of immediate popularity, and had confided more in his native genius, he never could have descended. He bewitched the nation by his melody, and dazzled it by his polished style, and was himself blinded by his own success. Having wandered from humanity in his *Eclogues* with boyish inexperience, the praise which these compositions obtained tempted him into a belief that Nature was not to be trusted, at least in pastoral Poetry. To prove this by example, he put his friend Gay upon writing those *Eclogues*, which their author intended to be burlesque. The instigator of the work, and his admirers, could perceive in them nothing but what

<sup>2</sup> This opinion seems actually to have been entertained by Adam Smith, the worst critic, David Hume not excepted, that Scotland, a soil to which this sort of weed seems natural, has produced.

was ridiculous. Nevertheless, though these Poems contain some detestable passages, the effect, as Dr. Johnson well observes, "of reality and truth became conspicuous even when the intention was to show them grovelling and degraded." The Pastorals, ludicrous to such as prided themselves upon their refinement, in spite of those disgusting passages, "became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations."

Something less than sixty years after the publication of the *Paradise Lost* appeared Thomson's *Winter*; which was speedily followed by his other *Seasons*. It is a work of inspiration; much of it is written from himself, and nobly from himself. How was it received? "It was no sooner read," says one of his contemporary biographers, "than universally admired: those only excepted who had not been used to feel, or to look for anything in poetry, beyond a *point* of satirical or epigrammatic wit, a smart *antithesis* richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an *elegiac* complaint. To such his manly classical spirit could not readily commend itself; till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing anything new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the Poet or love the Man."

This case appears to bear strongly against us:—but we must distinguish between wonder and legitimate admiration. The subject of the work is the changes produced in the appearances of nature by the revolution of the year: and, by undertaking to write in verse, Thomson pledged himself to

treat his subject as became a Poet. Now it is remarkable that, excepting the nocturnal Reverie of Lady Winchilsea, and a passage or two in the *Windsor Forest* of Pope, the poetry of the period intervening between the publication of the *Paradise Lost* and the *Seasons* does not contain a single new image of external nature, and scarcely presents a familiar one from which it can be inferred that the eye of the Poet had been steadily fixed upon his object, much less that his feelings had urged him to work upon it in the spirit of genuine imagination. To what a low state knowledge of the most obvious and important phenomena had sunk, is evident from the style in which Dryden has executed a description of Night in one of his Tragedies, and Pope his translation of the celebrated moonlight scene in the *Iliad*. A blind man, in the habit of attending accurately to descriptions casually dropped from the lips of those around him, might easily depict these appearances with more truth. Dryden's lines are vague, bombastic, and senseless;<sup>1</sup> those of Pope, though he had Homer to guide him, are throughout false and contradictory. The verses of Dryden, once highly celebrated, are forgotten; those of Pope still retain their hold upon public estimation,—nay, there is not a passage of descriptive poetry, which at this day finds so many and such ardent admirers. Strange to think of an enthusiast, as may have been the case with thousands, reciting those verses under the cope of a moonlight sky, without having his raptures in the least disturbed by a suspicion of their absurdity!—If these two distinguished writers could habitually think that the visible universe was of so little consequence to a poet, that it was scarcely necessary for him to cast his eyes upon it, we may be assured that those passages of the elder poets which faithfully and poetically describe the phenomena of nature, were not at that time holden in

1 *CORTES alone in a night-gown.*

All things are hush'd as Nature's self lay dead;  
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head.  
The little Birds in dreams their songs repeat,  
And sleeping Flowers beneath the Night-dew  
sweat:

Even Lust and Envy sleep; yet Love denies  
Rest to my soul, and slumber to my eyes.

Dryden's *Indian Emperor*.

much estimation, and that there was little accurate attention paid to those appearances.

Wonder is the natural product of Ignorance; and as the soil was *in such good condition* at the time of the publication of the Seasons, the crop was doubtless abundant. Neither individuals nor nations become corrupt all at once, nor are they enlightened in a moment. Thomson was an inspired poet, but he could not work miracles; in cases where the art of seeing had in some degree been learned, the teacher would further the proficiency of his pupils, but he could do little *more*; though so far does vanity assist men in acts of self-deception, that many would often fancy they recognised a likeness when they knew nothing of the original. Having shown that much of what his biographer deemed genuine admiration must in fact have been blind wonderment—how is there to be accounted for?—Thomson was fortunate in the very title of his poem, which seemed to bring it home to the prepared sympathies of every one: in the next place, notwithstanding his high powers, he writes a vicious style; and his false ornaments are exactly of that kind which would be most likely to strike the undiscerning. He likewise abounds with sentimental commonplaces that, from the manner in which they were brought forward, bore an imposing air of novelty. In any well-used copy of the Seasons the book generally opens of itself with the rhapsody on love, or with one of the stories (perhaps Damon and Musidora); these also are prominent in our collections of Extracts, and are the parts of his Work which, after all, were probably most efficient in first recommending the author to general notice. Pope, repaying praises which he had received, and wishing to extol him to the highest, only styles him "an elegant and philosophical Poet;" nor are we able to collect any unquestionable proofs that the true characteristics of Thomson's genius as an imaginative poet<sup>1</sup> were perceived, till

the elder Warton, almost forty years after the publication of the Seasons, pointed them out by a note in his Essay on the Life and Writings of Pope. In the Castle of Indolence (of which Gray speaks so coldly) these characteristics were almost as conspicuously displayed, and in verse more harmonious and diction more pure. Yet that fine poem was neglected on its appearance, and is at this day the delight only of a few!

When Thomson died, Collins breathed forth his regrets in an Elegiac Poem, in which he pronounces a poetical curse upon *him* who should regard with insensibility the place where the Poet's remains were deposited. The Poems of the mourner himself have now passed through innumerable editions, and are universally known; but if, when Collins died, the same kind of imprecation had been pronounced by a surviving admirer, small is the number whom it would not have comprehended. The notice which his poems attained during his life-time was so small, and of course the sale so insignificant, that not long before his death he deemed it right to repay to the bookseller the sum which he had advanced for them, and threw the edition into the fire.

Next in importance to the Seasons of Thomson, though at considerable distance from that work in order of time, come the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, collected, new-modelled, and in many instances (if such a contradiction in terms may be used) composed by the Editor, Dr. Percy. This work did not steal silently into the world, as is evident from the number of legendary tales that appeared not long after its publication; and had been modelled, as the authors persuaded themselves, after the old Ballad. The Compilation was however ill suited to the then existing taste of city society; and Dr. Johnson, 'mid the little senate to which he gave laws, was not sparing in his exertions to make it an object of contempt. The critic triumphed, the legendary imitators were deservedly disregarded, and, as undeservedly, their ill-imitated models sank, in this country, into temporary neglect; while Bürger, and other able writers of Germany, were translating or imitating

<sup>1</sup> Since these observations upon Thomson were written, I have perused the second edition of his Seasons, and find that even *that* does not contain the most striking passages which Warton points out for admiration; these, with other improvements, throughout the whole work, must have been added at a later period.

these Reliques, and composing, with the aid of inspiration thence derived, poems which are the delight of the German nation. Dr. Percy was so abashed by the ridicule flung upon his labours from the ignorance and insensibility of the persons with whom he lived, that, though while he was writing under a mask he had not wanted resolution to follow his genius into the regions of true simplicity and genuine pathos (as is evinced by the exquisite ballad of Sir Cauline and by many other pieces), yet when he appeared in his own person and character as a poetical writer, he adopted, as in the tale of the Hermit of Warkworth, a diction scarcely in any one of its features distinguishable from the vague, the glossy, and unfeeling language of his day. I mention this remarkable fact<sup>1</sup> with regret, esteeming the genius of Dr. Percy in this kind of writing superior to that of any other man by whom in modern times it has been cultivated. That even Bürger (to whom Klopstock gave in my hearing a commendation which he denied to Goethe and Schiller, pronouncing him to be a genuine poet, and one of the few among the Germans whose works would last) had not the fine sensibility of Percy, might be shown from many passages, in which he has deserted his original only to go astray. For example,

"Now daye was gone, and night was come,  
And all were fast asleepe,  
All save the Lady Emeline,  
Who sate in her bowre to weepe :  
And soone she heard her true Love's voice  
Low whispering at the walle,  
Awake, awake, my dear Ladye,  
'Tis I thy true-love call."

Which is thus tricked out and dilated :

"Als nun die Nacht Gebirg' und Thal  
Vermummt in Rabenschatten,

<sup>1</sup> Shenstone, in his *Schoolmistress*, gives a still more remarkable instance of this timidity. On its first appearance, (see D'Israeli's 2d Series of the *Curiosities of Literature*) the Poem was accompanied with an absurd prose commentary, showing, as indeed some incongruous expressions in the text imply, that the whole was intended for burlesque. In subsequent editions the commentary was dropped, and the People have since continued to read in seriousness, doing for the Author what he had not courage openly to venture upon for himself.

Und Hochburgs Lampen überall  
Schon ausgeflammt hatten,  
Und alles tief entschlafen war ;  
Doch nur das Fräulein immerdar,  
Voll Fieberängst, noch wachte,  
Und seinen Ritter dachte :  
Da horch ! Ein süsser Liebeston  
Kam leis' empor geflogen.  
"Ho, Trudchen, ho ! Da bin ich schon !  
Frisch auf ! Dich angezogen !"

But from humble ballads we must ascend to heroics.

All hail, Macpherson ! hail to thee, Sire of Ossian ! The Phantom was begotten by the snug embrace of an impudent Highlander upon a cloud of tradition—it travelled southward, where it was greeted with acclamation, and the thin Consistence took its course through Europe, upon the breath of popular applause. The Editor of the "Reliques" had indirectly preferred a claim to the praise of invention, by not concealing that his supplementary labours were considerable ! how selfish his conduct, contrasted with that of the disinterested Gael, who, like Lear, gives his kingdom away, and is content to become a pensioner upon his own issue for a beggarly pittance !—Open this far-famed Book !—I have done so at random, and the beginning of the "Epic Poem Temora," in eight Books, presents itself. "The blue waves of Ullin roll in light. The green hills are covered with day. Trees shake their dusky heads in the breeze. Grey torrents pour their noisy streams. Two green hills with aged oaks surround a narrow plain. The blue course of a stream is there. On its banks stood Cairbar of Atha. His spear supports the king ; the red eyes of his fear are sad. Cormac rises on his soul with all his ghastly wounds." Precious memorandums from the pocket-book of the blind Ossian !

If it be unbecoming, as I acknowledge that for the most part it is, to speak disrespectfully of Works that have enjoyed for a length of time a widely-spread reputation, without at the same time producing irrefragable proofs of their unworthiness, let me be forgiven upon this occasion.—Having had the good fortune to be born and reared in a mountainous country, from my very childhood I have felt the falsehood that pervades the volumes imposed upon the

world under the name of Ossian. From what I saw with my own eyes, I knew that the imagery was spurious. In nature everything is distinct, yet nothing defined into absolute independent singleness. In Macpherson's work, it is exactly the reverse; everything (that is not stolen) is in this manner defined, insulated, dislocated, deadened,—yet nothing distinct. It will always be so when words are substituted for things. To say that the characters never could exist, that the manners are impossible, and that a dream has more substance than the whole state of society, as there depicted, is doing nothing more than pronouncing a censure which Macpherson defied; when, with the steepes of Morven before his eyes, he could talk so familiarly of his Car-borne heroes;—of Morven, which, if one may judge from its appearance at the distance of a few miles, contains scarcely an acre of ground sufficiently accommodating for a sledge to be trailed along its surface.—Mr. Malcolm Laing has ably shown that the diction of this pretended translation is a motley assemblage from all quarters; but he is so fond of making out parallel passages as to call poor Macpherson to account for his "*ands*" and his "*buts*!" and he has weakened his argument by conducting it as if he thought that every striking resemblance was a *conscious* plagiarism. It is enough that the coincidences are too remarkable for its being probable or possible that they could arise in different minds without communication between them. Now as the Translators of the Bible, and Shakspeare, Milton, and Pope, could not be indebted to Macpherson, it follows that he must have owed his fine feathers to them; unless we are prepared gravely to assert, with Madame de Staël, that many of the characteristic beauties of our most celebrated English Poets are derived from the ancient Fingallian; in which case the modern translator would have been but giving back to Ossian his own.—It is consistent that Lucien Buonaparte, who could censure Milton for having surrounded Satan in the infernal regions with courtly and regal splendour, should pronounce the modern Ossian to be the glory of Scotland;—a country that has produced a Dunbar, a Buchanan, a Thomson, and a Burns!

These opinions are of ill omen for the Epic ambition of him who has given them to the world.

Yet, much as those pretended treasures of antiquity have been admired, they have been wholly unimportant upon the literature of the Country. No succeeding writer appears to have caught from them a ray of inspiration; no author, in the least distinguished, has ventured formally to imitate them—except the boy, Chatterton, on their first appearance. He had perceived, from the successful trials which he himself had made in literary forgery, how few critics were able to distinguish between a real ancient medal and a counterfeit of modern manufacture; and he set himself to the work of filling a magazine with *Saxon Poems*,—counterparts of those of Ossian, as like his as one of his misty stars is to another. This incapability to amalgamate with the literature of the Island is, in my estimation, a decisive proof that the book is essentially unnatural; nor should I require any other to demonstrate it to be a forgery, audacious as worthless.—Contrast, in this respect, the effect of Macpherson's publication with the Reliques of Percy, so unassuming, so modest in their pretensions!—I have already stated how much Germany is indebted to this latter work; and for our own country, its poetry has been absolutely redeemed by it. I do not think that there is an able writer in verse of the present day who would not be proud to acknowledge his obligations to the Reliques; I know that it is so with my friends; and, for myself, I am happy in this occasion to make a public avowal of my own.

Dr. Johnson, more fortunate in his contempt of the labours of Macpherson than those of his modest friend, was solicited not long after to furnish Prefaces, biographical and critical, for the works of some of the most eminent English Poets. The booksellers took upon themselves to make the collection; they referred probably to the most popular miscellanies, and, unquestionably, to their books of accounts; and decided upon the claim of authors to be admitted into a body of the most eminent from the familiarity of their names with the readers of that day, and by the profits which, from the sale of his works, each had



brought and was bringing to the Trade. The Editor was allowed a limited exercise of discretion, and the Authors whom he recommended are scarcely to be mentioned without a smile. We open the volume of Prefatory Lives, and to our astonishment the *first* name we find is that of Cowley!—What is become of the morning-star of English Poetry? Where is the bright Elizabethan constellation? Or, if names be more acceptable than images, where is the ever-to-be-honoured Chaucer? where is Spenser? where Sidney? and, lastly, where he, whose rights as a poet, contradistinguished from those which he is universally allowed to possess as a dramatist, we have vindicated,—where Shakspeare?—These, and a multitude of others not unworthy to be placed near them, their contemporaries and successors, we have *not*. But in their stead, we have (could better be expected when precedence was to be settled by an abstract of reputation at any given period made, as in this case before us?) Roscommon, and Stepney, and Phillips, and Walsh, and Smith, and Duke, and King, and Spratt—Halifax, Granville, Sheffield, Congreve, Broome, and other reputed Magnates—metrical writers utterly worthless and useless, except for occasions like the present, when their productions are referred to as evidence what a small quantity of brain is necessary to procure a considerable stock of admiration, provided the aspirant will accommodate himself to the likings and fashions of his day.

As I do not mean to bring down this retrospect to our own times, it may with propriety be closed at the era of this distinguished event. From the literature of other ages and countries, proofs equally cogent might have been adduced, that the opinions announced in the former part of this Essay are founded upon truth. It was not an agreeable office, nor a prudent undertaking, to declare them; but their importance seemed to render it a duty. It may still be asked, where lies the particular relation of what has been said to these Volumes?—The question will be easily answered by the discerning Reader who is old enough to remember the taste that prevailed when some of these poems were first published, seventeen years ago; who

has also observed to what degree the poetry of this Island has since that period been coloured by them; and who is further aware of the unremitting hostility with which, upon some principle or other, they have each and all been opposed. A sketch of my own notion of the constitution of Fame has been given; and, as far as concerns myself, I have cause to be satisfied. The love, the admiration, the indifference, the slight, the aversion, and even the contempt, with which these Poems have been received, knowing, as I do, the source within my own mind from which they have proceeded, and the labour and pains which, when labour and pains appeared needful, have been bestowed upon them, must all, if I think consistently, be received as pledges and tokens, bearing the same general impression, though widely different in value;—they are all proofs that for the present time I have not laboured in vain; and afford assurances, more or less authentic, that the products of my industry will endure.

If there be one conclusion more forcibly pressed upon us than another by the review which has been given of the fortunes and fate of poetical Works, it is this,—that every author, as far as he is great and at the same time *original*, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed: so has it been, so will it continue to be. This remark was long since made to me by the philosophical Friend for the separation of whose poems from my own I have previously expressed my regret. The predecessors of an original Genius of a high order will have smoothed the way for all that he has in common with them;—and much he will have in common; but, for what is peculiarly his own, he will be called upon to clear and often to shape his own road:—he will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps.

And where lies the real difficulty of creating that taste by which a truly original poet is to be relished? Is it in breaking the bonds of custom, in overcoming the prejudices of false refinement, and displacing the aversions of inexperience? Or, if he labour for an object which here and elsewhere I have proposed to myself, does it consist in divesting the reader of the

pride that induces him to dwell upon those points wherein men differ from each other, or the exclusion of those in which all men are alike, or the same; and in making him ashamed of the vanity that renders him insensible of the appropriate excellence which civil arrangements, less unjust than might appear, and Nature illimitable in her bounty, have conferred on men who may stand below him in the scale of society? Finally, does it lie in establishing that dominion over the spirits of readers by which they are to be humbled and humanised, in order that they may be purified and exalted?

If these ends are to be attained by the mere communication of *knowledge*, it does not lie here.—TASTE, I would remind the reader, like IMAGINATION, is a word which has been forced to extend its services far beyond the point to which philosophy would have confined them. It is a metaphor, taken from a *passive* sense of the human body, and transferred to things which are in their essence *not* passive,—to intellectual acts and operations. The word Imagination has been overstrained, from impulses honourable to mankind, to meet the demands of the faculty which is perhaps the noblest of our nature. In the instance of Taste, the process has been reversed; and from the prevalence of dispositions at once injurious and discreditable, being no other than that selfishness which is the child of sympathy,—which, as Nations decline in productive and creative power, makes them value themselves upon a presumed refinement of judging. Poverty of language is the primary cause of the use which we make of the word Imagination; but the word Taste has been stretched to the sense which it bears in modern Europe by habits of self-conceit, inducing that inversion in the order of things whereby a passive faculty is made paramount among the faculties conversant with the fine arts. Proportion and congruity, the requisite knowledge being supposed, are subjects upon which Taste may be trusted; it is competent to his office;—for in its intercourse with these his mind is *passive*, and is affected painfully or pleasurable as by an instinct. But the profound and the exquisite in feeling, the lofty and universal in thought and imagination; or, in ordinary language, the

pathetic and the sublime;—are neither of them, accurately speaking, objects of a faculty which could ever without a sinking in the spirit of Nations have been designated by the metaphor—*Taste*. And why? Because without the exertion of a co-operating *power* in the mind of the Reader, there can be no adequate sympathy with either of these emotions: without this auxiliary impulse, elevated or profound passion cannot exist.

Passion, it must be observed, is derived from a word which signifies *suffering*; but the connection which suffering has with effort, with exertion, and *action*, is immediate and inseparable. How strikingly is this property of human nature exhibited by the fact that, in popular language, to be in a passion is to be angry!—But,

“Anger in hasty words or blows  
Itself discharges on its foes.”

To be moved, then, by a passion, is to be excited, often to external, and always to internal, effort; whether for the continuance and strengthening of the passion, or for its suppression, accordingly as the course which it takes may be painful or pleasurable. If the latter, the soul must contribute to its support, or it never becomes vivid,—and soon languishes, and dies. And this brings us to the point. If every great poet with whose writings men are familiar, in the highest exercise of his genius, before he can be thoroughly enjoyed, has to call forth and to communicate *power*, this service, in a still greater degree, falls upon an original writer at his first appearance in the world.—Of genius the only proof is the act of doing well what is worthy to be done, and what was never done before: Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature. Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such a manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the poet? Is it to be supposed that the reader

can make progress of this kind, like an Indian prince or general—stretched on his palanquin, and borne by slaves? No; he is invigorated and inspirited by his leader, in order that he may exert himself; for he cannot proceed in quiescence, he cannot be carried like a dead weight. Therefore to create taste is to call forth and bestow power, of which knowledge is the effect; and *there* lies the true difficulty.

As the pathetic participates of an *animal* sensation, it might seem that, if the springs of this emotion were genuine, all men, possessed of competent knowledge of the facts and circumstances, would be instantaneously affected. And, doubtless, in the works of every true poet will be found passages of that species of excellence which is proved by effects immediate and universal. But there are emotions of the pathetic that are simple and direct, and others that are complex and revolutionary; some to which the heart yields with gentleness; others against which it struggles with pride; these varieties are infinite as the combinations of circumstance and the constitutions of character. Remember, also, that the medium through which, in poetry, the heart is to be affected is language; a thing subject to endless fluctuations and arbitrary associations. The genius of the poet melts these down for his purpose; but they retain their shape and quality to him who is not capable of exerting, within his own mind, a corresponding energy. There is also a meditative, as well as a human, pathos; an enthusiastic as well as an ordinary sorrow; a sadness that has its seat in the depths of reason, to which the mind cannot sink gently of itself—but to which it must descend by treading the steps of thought. And for the sublime,—if we consider what are the cares that occupy the passing day, and how remote is the practice and the course of life from the sources of sublimity in the soul of Man, can it be wondered that there is little existing preparation for a poet charged with a new mission to extend its kingdom, and to augment and spread its enjoyments?

Away, then, with the senseless iteration of the word *popular* applied to new works in poetry, as if there were no test of excellence in this first of the fine arts but that all men should run after its productions,

as if urged by an appetite, or constrained by a spell!—The qualities of writing best fitted for eager reception are either such as startle the world into attention by their audacity and extravagance; or they are chiefly of a superficial kind, lying upon the surfaces of manners; or arising out of a selection and arrangement of incidents, by which the mind is kept upon the stretch of curiosity, and the fancy amused without the trouble of thought. But in everything which is to send the soul into herself, to be admonished of her weakness, or to be made conscious of her power; wherever life and nature are described as operated upon by the creative or abstracting virtue of the imagination; wherever the instinctive wisdom of antiquity and her heroic passions uniting, in the heart of the poet, with the meditative wisdom of later ages, have produced that accord of sublimated humanity, which is at once a history of the remote past and a prophetic enunciation of the remotest future; *there*, the poet must reconcile himself for a season to few and scattered hearers.—Grand thoughts (and Shakspeare must often have sighed over this truth), as they are most naturally and most fitly conceived in solitude, so can they not be brought forth in the midst of plaudits without some violation of their sanctity. Go to a silent exhibition of the productions of the sister Art, and be convinced that the qualities which dazzle at first sight, and kindle the admiration of the multitude, are essentially different from those by which permanent influence is secured. Let us not shrink from following up these principles as far as they will carry us, and conclude with observing that there never has been a period, and perhaps never will be, in which vicious poetry, of some kind or other, has not excited more zealous admiration, and been far more generally read, than good; but this advantage attends the good, that the *individual*, as well as the species, survives from age to age; whereas, of the depraved, though the species be immortal, the individual quickly *perishes*; the object of present admiration vanishes, being supplanted by some other as easily produced; which, though no better, brings with it at least the irritation of novelty,—with adaptation, more or less

skilful, to the changing humours of the majority of those who are most at leisure to regard poetical works when they first solicit their attention.

Is it the result of the whole that, in the opinion of the Writer, the judgment of the People is not to be respected? The thought is most injurious; and, could the charge be brought against him, he would repel it with indignation. The People have already been justified, and their eulogium pronounced by implication, when it was said above that, of *good* poetry, the *individual*, as well as the species, *survives*. And how does it survive but through the People? What preserves it but their intellect and their wisdom?

"—Past and future, are the wings  
On whose support, harmoniously conjoined,  
Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge—" *MS.*

The voice that issues from this Spirit, is that Vox Populi which the Deity inspires. Foolish must he be who can mistake for this a local acclamation, or a transitory outcry—transitory though it be for years, local though from a Nation. Still more lamentable is his error who can believe that there is anything of divine infallibility in the clamour of that small though loud portion of the community, ever governed by factitious influence, which, under the name of the PUBLIC, passes itself, upon the unthinking, for the PEOPLE. Towards the Public, the Writer hopes that he feels as much deference as it is entitled to: but to the People, philosophically characterised, and to the embodied spirit of their knowledge, so far as it exists and moves, at the present, faithfully supported by its two wings, the past and the future, his devout respect, his reverence, is due. He offers it willingly and readily; and, this done, takes leave of his Readers, by assuring them that, if he were not persuaded that the contents of these Volumes, and the Work to which they are subsidiary, evince something of the "Vision and the Faculty divine"; and that, both in words and things, they will operate in their degree to extend the domain of sensibility for the delight, the honour, and the benefit of human nature, notwithstanding the many happy hours

which he has employed in their composition, and the manifold comforts and enjoyments they have procured to him, he would not, if a wish could do it, save them from immediate destruction—from becoming at this moment, to the world, as a thing that had never been. 1815.

## DEDICATION

PREFIXED TO THE EDITION OF 1815

TO

SIR GEORGE HOWLAND BEAUMONT,  
BART.

MY DEAR SIR GEORGE,

Accept my thanks for the permission given me to dedicate these Volumes to you. In addition to a lively pleasure derived from general considerations, I feel a particular satisfaction; for, by inscribing these Poems with your Name, I seem to myself in some degree to repay, by an appropriate honour, the great obligation which I owe to one part of the Collection—as having been the means of first making us personally known to each other. Upon much of the remainder, also, you have a peculiar claim,—for some of the best pieces were composed under the shade of your own groves, upon the classic ground of Coleorton; where I was animated by the recollection of those illustrious Poets of your name and family, who were born in that neighbourhood; and, we may be assured, did not wander with indifference by the dashing stream of Grace Dieu, and among the rocks that diversify the forest of Charnwood.—Nor is there any one to whom such parts of this Collection as have been inspired or coloured by the beautiful Country from which I now address you, could be presented with more propriety than to yourself—to whom it has suggested so many admirable pictures. Early in life, the sublimity and beauty of this region excited your admiration; and I know that you are bound to it in mind by a still strengthening attachment.

Wishing and hoping that this Work, with the embellishments it has received

from your pencil,<sup>1</sup> may survive as a lasting memorial of a friendship, which I reckon among the blessings of my life,

I have the honour to be,

My dear Sir George,

Yours most affectionately and faithfully,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,

February 1, 1815

## PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1815

THE powers requisite for the production of poetry are: first, those of Observation and Description,—*i.e.*, the ability to observe with accuracy things as they are in themselves, and with fidelity to describe them, unmodified by any passion or feeling existing in the mind of the describer: whether the things depicted be actually present to the senses, or have a place only in the memory. This power, though indispensable to a Poet, is one which he employs only in submission to necessity, and never for a continuance of time: as its exercise supposes all the higher qualities of the mind to be passive, and in a state of subjection to external objects, much in the same way as a translator or engraver ought to be to his original. 2dly, Sensibility,—which, the more exquisite it is, the wider will be the range of a poet's perceptions; and the more will he be incited to observe objects, both as they exist in themselves and as re-acted upon by his own mind. (The distinction between poetic and human sensibility has been marked in the character of the Poet delineated in the original preface.) 3dly, Reflection,—which makes the Poet acquainted with the value of actions, images, thoughts, and feelings; and assists the sensibility in perceiving their connection with each other. 4thly, Imagination and Fancy,—to modify, to create, and to associate. 5thly, Invention,—by which characters are composed out of materials supplied by observation; whether of the Poet's own heart and mind, or of external life and

nature; and such incidents and situations produced as are most impressive to the imagination, and most fitted to do justice to the characters, sentiments, and passions which the Poet undertakes to illustrate. And, lastly, Judgment,—to decide how and where, and in what degree, each of these faculties ought to be exerted; so that the less shall not be sacrificed to the greater, nor the greater, slighting the less, arrogant to its own injury, more than its due. By judgment, also, is determined what are the laws and appropriate graces of every species of composition.<sup>2</sup>

The materials of Poetry, by these powers collected and produced, are cast, by means of various moulds, into divers forms. The moulds may be enumerated, and the forms specified, in the following order. 1st, The Narrative,—including the Epopœia, the Historic Poem, the Tale, the Romance, the Mock-heroic, and, if the spirit of Homer will tolerate such neighbourhood, that dear production of our days, the metrical Novel. Of this Class, the distinguishing mark is, that the Narrator, however liberally his speaking agents be introduced, is himself the source from which everything primarily flows. Epic Poets, in order that their mode of composition may accord with the elevation of their subject, represent themselves as *singing* from the inspiration of the Muse. "*Arma virumque cano*;" but this is a fiction, in modern times, of slight value: the *Iliad* or the *Paradise Lost* would gain little in our estimation by being chanted. The other poets who belong to this class are commonly content to *tell* their tale:—so that of the whole it may be affirmed, that they neither require nor reject the accompaniment of music.

2dly, The Dramatic,—consisting of Tragedy, Historic Drama, Comedy, and Masque, in which the poet does not appear at all in his own person, and where the whole action is carried on by speech and dialogue of the agents; music being admitted only incidentally and rarely. The Opera may be placed here, inasmuch as it proceeds by dialogue; though depending

<sup>2</sup> As sensibility to harmony of numbers, and the power of producing it, are invariably attendant upon the faculties above specified, nothing has been said upon those requisites.

<sup>1</sup> The state of the plates has, for some time, not allowed them to be repeated.

to the degree that it does, upon music, it has a strong claim to be ranked with the lyrical. The characteristic and impassioned Epistle, of which Ovid and Pope have given examples, considered as a species of monodrama, may, without impropriety, be placed in this class.

3dly, The Lyrical—containing the Hymn, the Ode, the Elegy, the Song, and the Ballad; in all which, for the production of their *full* effect, an accompaniment of music is indispensable.

4thly, The Idyllium,—descriptive chiefly either of the processes and appearances of external nature, as the Seasons of Thomson; or of characters, manners, and sentiments, as are Shenstone's Schoolmistress, The Cotter's Saturday Night of Burns, the Twa Dogs of the same Author; or of these in conjunction with the appearances of Nature, as most of the pieces of Theocritus, the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton, Beattie's Minstrel, Goldsmith's Deserted Village. The Epitaph, the Inscription, the Sonnet, most of the epistles of poets writing in their own persons, and all loco-descriptive poetry, belong to this class.

5thly, Didactic,—the principal object of which is direct instruction; as the Poem of Lucretius, the Georgics of Virgil, The Fleece of Dyer, Mason's English Garden, etc.

And, lastly, philosophical Satire, like that of Horace and Juvenal; personal and occasional Satire rarely comprehending sufficient of the general in the individual to be dignified with the name of poetry.

Out of the three last has been constructed a composite order, of which Young's Night Thoughts, and Cowper's Task, are excellent examples.

It is deducible from the above, that poems, apparently miscellaneous, may with propriety be arranged either with reference to the powers of mind *predominant* in the production of them; or to the mould in which they are cast; or, lastly, to the subjects to which they relate. From each of these considerations, the following Poems have been divided into classes; which, that the work may more obviously correspond with the course of human life, and for the sake of exhibiting in it the

three requisites of a legitimate whole, a beginning, a middle, and an end, have been also arranged, as far as it was possible, according to an order of time, commencing with Childhood, and terminating with Old Age, Death, and Immortality. My guiding wish was that the small pieces of which these volumes consist, thus discriminated, might be regarded under a two-fold view; as composing an entire work within themselves, and as adjuncts to the philosophical Poem, "The Recluse." This arrangement has long presented itself habitually to my own mind. Nevertheless, I should have preferred to scatter the contents of these volumes at random, if I had been persuaded that, by the plan adopted, anything material would be taken from the natural effect of the pieces, individually, on the mind of the unreflecting Reader. I trust there is a sufficient variety in each class to prevent this; while, for him who reads with reflection, the arrangement will serve as a commentary unostentatiously directing his attention to my purposes, both particular and general. But as I wish to guard against the possibility of misleading by this classification, it is proper first to remind the Reader that certain poems are placed according to the powers of mind, in the Author's conception, predominant in the production of them; *predominant*, which implies the exertion of other faculties in less degree. Where there is more imagination than fancy in a poem, it is placed under the head of imagination, and *vice versa*. Both the above classes might without impropriety have been enlarged from that consisting of "Poems founded on the Affections;" as might this latter from those, and from the class "proceeding from Sentiment and Reflection." The most striking characteristics of each piece, mutual illustration, variety, and proportion, have governed me throughout.

None of the other Classes, except those of Fancy and Imagination, require any particular notice. But a remark of general application may be made. All Poets, except the dramatic, have been in the practice of feigning that their works were composed to the music of the harp or lyre: with what degree of affectation this has been done in modern times, I leave to the

judicious to determine. For my own part, I have not been disposed to violate probability so far, or to make such a large demand upon the Reader's charity. Some of these pieces are essentially lyrical; and, therefore, cannot have their due force without a supposed musical accompaniment; but, in much the greatest part, as a substitute for the classic lyre or romantic harp, I require nothing more than an animated or impassioned recitation, adapted to the subject. Poems, however humble in their kind, if they be good in that kind, cannot read themselves; the law of long syllable and short must not be so inflexible,—the letter of metre must not be so impassive to the spirit of versification,—as to deprive the Reader of all voluntary power to modulate, in subordination to the sense, the music of the poem;—in the same manner as his mind is left at liberty, and even summoned, to act upon its thoughts and images. But, though the accompaniment of a musical instrument be frequently dispensed with, the true Poet does not therefore abandon his poetique distinct from that of the mere Proseman;

"He murmurs near the running brooks  
A music sweeter than their own."

Let us come now to the consideration of the words Fancy and Imagination, as employed in the classification of the following Poems. "A man," says an intelligent author, "has imagination in proportion as he can distinctly copy in idea the impressions of sense: it is the faculty which *images* within the mind the phenomena of sensation. A man has fancy in proportion as he can call up, connect, or associate, at pleasure, those internal images (*φαντάζειν* is to cause to appear), so as to complete ideal representations of absent objects. Imagination is the power of depicting, and fancy of evoking and combining. The imagination is formed by patient observation; the fancy by a voluntary activity in shifting the scenery of the mind. The more accurate the imagination, the more safely may a painter, or a poet, undertake a delineation, or a description, without the presence of the objects to be characterised. The more versatile the fancy, the more original and striking will be the decorations

produced."—*British Synonyms discriminated*, by W. Taylor.

Is not this as if a man should undertake to supply an account of a building, and be so intent upon what he had discovered of the foundation, as to conclude his task without once looking up at the superstructure? Here, as in other instances throughout the volume, the judicious Author's mind is enthralled by Etymology; he takes up the original word as his guide and escort, and too often does not perceive how soon he becomes its prisoner, without liberty to tread in any path but that to which it confines him. It is not easy to find out how imagination, thus explained, differs from distinct remembrance of images; or fancy from quick and vivid recollection of them: each is nothing more than a mode of memory. If the two words bear the above meaning, and no other, what term is left to designate that faculty of which the Poet is "all compact;" he whose eye glances from earth to heaven, whose spiritual attributes body forth what his pen is prompt in turning to shape; or what is left to characterise Fancy, as insinuating herself into the heart of objects with creative activity?—Imagination, in the sense of the word as giving title to a class of the following Poems, has no reference to images that are merely a faithful copy, existing in the mind, of absent external objects; but is a word of higher import, denoting operations of the mind upon those objects, and processes of creation or of composition, governed by certain fixed laws. I proceed to illustrate my meaning by instances. A parrot *hangs* from the wires of his cage by his beak; by his claws; or a monkey from the bough of a tree by his paws or his tail. Each creature does so literally and actually. In the first Eclogue of Virgil, the shepherd thinking of the time when he is to take leave of his farm, thus addresses his goats:—

"Non ego vos posthac viridi projectus in antro  
Dumosa pendere procul de rupe videbo."

—"half way down  
*Hangs* one who gathers samphire,"

is the well-known expression of Shakspeare, delineating an ordinary image upon the cliffs of Dover. In these two instances is

a slight exertion of the faculty which I denominate imagination, in the use of one word: neither the goats nor the samphire-gatherer do literally hang, as does the parrot or the monkey; but, presenting to the senses something of such an appearance, the mind in its activity, for its own gratification, contemplates them as hanging.

"As when far off at sea a fleet descried  
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds  
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles  
Of Ternate or Tidore, whence merchants bring  
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood  
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape  
Ply, stemming nightly toward the Pole: so  
seemed  
Far off the flying Fiend."

Here is the full strength of the imagination involved in the word *hangs*, and exerted upon the whole image: First, the fleet, an aggregate of many ships, is represented as one mighty person, whose track, we know and feel, is upon the waters; but, taking advantage of its appearance to the senses, the Poet dares to represent it as *hanging in the clouds*, both for the gratification of the mind in contemplating the image itself, and in reference to the motion and appearance of the sublime objects to which it is compared.

From impressions of sight we will pass to those of sound; which, as they must necessarily be of a less definite character, shall be selected from these volumes:

"Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods,"  
of the same bird,

"His voice was buried among trees,  
Yet to be come at by the breeze;"

"O, Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?"

The stock-dove is said to *coo*, a sound well imitating the note of the bird; but, by the intervention of the metaphor *broods*, the affections are called in by the imagination to assist in marking the manner in which the bird reiterates and prolongs her soft note, as if herself delighting to listen to it, and participating of a still and quiet satisfaction, like that which may be supposed inseparable from the continuous

process of incubation. "His voice was buried among trees," a metaphor expressing the love of *seclusion* by which this Bird is marked; and characterising its note as not partaking of the shrill and the piercing, and therefore more easily deadened by the intervening shade; yet a note so peculiar and withal so pleasing, that the breeze, gifted with that love of the sound which the Poet feels, penetrates the shades in which it is entombed, and conveys it to the ear of the listener.

"Shall I call thee Bird,  
Or but a wandering Voice?"

This concise interrogation characterises the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence; the Imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.

Thus far of images independent of each other, and immediately endowed by the mind with properties that do not inhere in them, upon an incitement from properties and qualities the existence of which is inherent and obvious. These processes of imagination are carried on either by conferring additional properties upon an object, or abstracting from it some of those which it actually possesses, and thus enabling it to re-act upon the mind which hath performed the process like a new existence.

I pass from the Imagination acting upon an individual image to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. The Reader has already had a fine instance before him in the passage quoted from Virgil, where the apparently perilous situation of the goat, hanging upon the shaggy precipice, is contrasted with that of the shepherd contemplating it from the seclusion of the cavern in which he lies stretched at ease and in security. Take these images separately, and how unaffected the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to, each other!

"As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie  
Couched on the bald top of an eminence,



Wonder to all who do the same espy  
 By what means it could thither come, and  
     whence,  
 So that it seems a thing endued with sense,  
 Like a sea-beast crawled forth, which on a shelf  
 Of rock or sand reposes, there to sun himself.  
 Such seemed this Man; not all alive or dead,  
 Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age.

\* \* \* \* \*  
 Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,  
 That heareth not the loud winds when they call,  
 And moveth altogether if it move at all."

In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the Imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the sea-beast; and the sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged Man; who is divested of so much of the indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite and coalesce in just comparison. After what has been said, the image of the cloud need not be commented upon.

Thus far of an endowing or modifying power; but the Imagination also shapes and *creates*; and how? By innumerable processes; and in none does it more delight than in that of consolidating numbers into unity, and dissolving and separating unity into number, — alternations proceeding from, and governed by, a sublime consciousness of the soul in her own mighty and almost divine powers. Recur to the passage already cited from Milton. When the compact Fleet, as one Person, has been introduced "Sailing from Bengala," "They," *i.e.* the "merchants," representing the fleet resolved into a multitude of ships, "ply" their voyage towards the extremities of the earth: "So" (referring to the word "As" in the commencement) "seemed the flying Fiend;" the image of his Person acting to recombine the multitude of ships into one body, — the point from which the comparison set out. "So seemed," and to whom seemed? To the

heavenly Muse who dictates the poem, to the eye of the Poet's mind, and to that of the Reader, present at one moment in the wide Ethiopian, and the next in the solitudes, then first broken in upon, of the infernal regions!

"Modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis."

Hear again this mighty Poet, — speaking of the Messiah going forth to expel from heaven the rebellious angels,

"Attended by ten thousand thousand Saints  
 He onward came: far off his coming shone," —

the retinue of Saints, and the Person of the Messiah himself, lost almost and merged in the splendour of that indefinite abstraction "His coming"!

As I do not mean here to treat this subject further than to throw some light upon the present Volumes, and especially upon one division of them, I shall spare myself and the Reader the trouble of considering the Imagination as it deals with thoughts and sentiments, as it regulates the composition of characters, and determines the course of actions: I will not consider it (more than I have already done by implication) as that power which, in the language of one of my most esteemed Friends, "draws all things to one; which makes things animate or inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects with their accessories, take one colour and serve to one effect."<sup>1</sup> The grand storehouses of enthusiastic and meditative Imagination, of poetical, as contradistinguished from human and dramatic Imagination, are the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scriptures, and the works of Milton; to which I cannot forbear to add those of Spenser. I select these writers in preference to those of ancient Greece and Rome, because the anthropomorphism of the Pagan religion subjected the minds of the greatest poets in those countries too much to the bondage of definite form; from which the Hebrews were preserved by their abhorrence of idolatry. This abhorrence was almost as strong in our great epic Poet, both from circumstances of his life, and from the constitution of his mind. How-

<sup>1</sup> Charles Lamb upon the genius of Hogarth.

ever imbued the surface might be with classical literature, he was a Hebrew in soul; and all things tended in him towards the sublime. Spenser, of a gentler nature, maintained his freedom by aid of his allegorical spirit, at one time inciting him to create persons out of abstractions; and, at another, by a superior effort of genius, to give the universality and permanence of abstractions to his human beings, by means of attributes and emblems that belong to the highest moral truths and the purest sensations,—of which his character of Una is a glorious example. Of the human and dramatic Imagination the works of Shakspeare are an inexhaustible source.

"I tax not you, ye Elements, with unkindness,  
I never gave you kingdoms, call'd you  
Daughters!"

And if, bearing in mind the many Poets distinguished by this prime quality, whose names I omit to mention, yet justified by recollection of the insults which the ignorant, the incapable, and the presumptuous, have heaped upon these and my other writings, I may be permitted to anticipate the judgment of posterity upon myself, I shall declare (censurable, I grant, if the notoriety of the fact above stated does not justify me) that I have given in these unfavourable times evidence of exertions of this faculty upon its worthiest objects, the external universe, the moral and religious sentiments of Man, his natural affections, and his acquired passions; which have the same ennobling tendency as the productions of men, in this kind, worthy to be holden in undying remembrance.

To the mode in which Fancy has already been characterised as the power of evoking and combining, or, as my friend Mr. Coleridge has styled it, "the aggregative and associative power," my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and to combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy; but either the materials evoked and combined are different, or they are brought together under a different law, and for a different purpose. Fancy does not require that the materials which she makes use of should be suscep-

tible of change in their constitution from her touch; and, where they admit of modification, it is enough for her purpose if it be slight, limited, and evanescent. Directly the reverse of these are the desires and demands of the Imagination. She recoils from everything but the plastic, the pliant, and the indefinite. She leaves it to Fancy to describe Queen Mab as coming,

"In shape no bigger than an agate-stone  
On the fore-finger of an alderman."

Having to speak of stature, she does not tell you that her gigantic Angel was as tall as Pompey's Pillar; much less that he was twelve cubits or twelve hundred cubits high; or that his dimensions equalled those of Teneriffe or Atlas;—because these, and if they were a million times as high it would be the same, are bounded: The expression is, "His stature reached the sky!" the illimitable firmament!—When the Imagination frames a comparison, if it does not strike on the first presentation, a sense of the truth of the likeness, from the moment that it is perceived, grows—and continues to grow—upon the mind; the resemblance depending less upon outline of form and feature than upon expression and effect; less upon casual and outstanding than upon inherent and internal properties: moreover, the images invariably modify each other.—The law under which the processes of Fancy are carried on is as capricious as the accidents of things, and the effects are surprising, playful, ludicrous, amusing, tender, or pathetic, as the objects happen to be appositely produced or fortunately combined. Fancy depends upon the rapidity and profusion with which she scatters her thoughts and images; trusting that their number, and the felicity with which they are linked together, will make amends for the want of individual value: or she prides herself upon the curious subtilty and the successful elaboration with which she can detect their lurking affinities. If she can win you over to her purpose, and impart to you her feelings, she cares not how unstable or transitory may be her influence, knowing that it will not be out of her power to resume it upon an apt occasion. But the Imagination is con-

sconscious of an indestructible dominion;—the Soul may fall away from it, not being able to sustain its grandeur; but, if once felt and acknowledged, by no act of any other faculty of the mind can it be relaxed, impaired, or diminished.—Fancy is given to quicken and to beguile the temporal part of our nature, Imagination to incite and to support the eternal.—Yet is it not the less true that Fancy, as she is an active, is also, under her own laws and in her own spirit, a creative faculty. In what manner Fancy ambitiously aims at a rivalry with Imagination, and Imagination stoops to work with the materials of Fancy, might be illustrated from the compositions of all eloquent writers, whether in prose or verse; and chiefly from those of our own Country. Scarcely a page of the impassioned parts of Bishop Taylor's Works can be opened that shall not afford examples.—Referring the Reader to those inestimable volumes, I will content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed to Lord Chesterfield) in contrast with a passage from the *Paradise Lost*:—

"The dews of the evening most carefully shun,  
They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun."

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with other appearances of sympathising Nature, thus marks the immediate consequence,

"Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops  
Wept at completing of the mortal sin."

The associating link is the same in each instance: Dew and rain, not distinguishable from the liquid substance of tears, are employed as indications of sorrow. A flash of surprise is the effect in the former case; a flash of surprise, and nothing more; for the nature of things does not sustain the combination. In the latter, the effects from the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in nature so manifested; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as "Earth had before trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan."

Finally, I will refer to Cotton's "Ode upon Winter," an admirable composition, though stained with some peculiarities of the age in which he lived, for a general illustration of the characteristics of Fancy. The middle part of this ode contains a most lively description of the entrance of Winter, with his retinue, as "A palsied king," and yet a military monarch,—advancing for conquest with his army; the several bodies of which, and their arms and equipments, are described with a rapidity of detail, and a profusion of *fanciful* comparisons, which indicate on the part of the poet extreme activity of intellect, and a correspondent hurry of delightful feeling. Winter retires from the foe into his fortress, where

—"a magazine  
Of sovereign juice is cellared in;  
Liquor that will the siege maintain  
Should Phœbus ne'er return again."

Though myself a water-drinker, I cannot resist the pleasure of transcribing what follows, as an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling than, in its preceding passages, the Poem supplies of her management of forms.

"'Tis that, that gives the poet rage,  
And thaws the gelly'd blood of age;  
Matures the young, restores the old,  
And makes the fainting coward bold.

It lays the careful head to rest,  
Calms palpitations in the breast,  
Renders our lives' misfortune sweet;

Then let the chill Sirocco blow,  
And gird us round with hills of snow,  
Or else go whistle to the shore,  
And make the hollow mountains roar,

Whilst we together jovial sit  
Careless, and crowned with mirth and wit,  
Where, though bleak winds confine us home,  
Our fancies round the world shall roam.

We'll think of all the Friends we know,  
And drink to all worth drinking to;  
When having drunk all thine and mine,  
We rather shall want healths than wine.

But where Friends fail us, we'll supply  
Our friendships with our charity;  
Men that remote in sorrows live,  
Shall by our lusty brimmers thrive.

We'll drink the wanting into wealth,  
And those that languish into health,  
The afflicted into joy; th' oppress  
Into security and rest.

The worthy in disgrace shall find  
Favour return again more kind,  
And in restraint who stifled lie,  
Shall taste the air of liberty.

The brave shall triumph in success,  
The lovers shall have mistresses,  
Poor unregarded Virtue, praise,  
And the neglected Poet, bays.

Thus shall our healths do others good,  
Whilst we ourselves do all we would;  
For, freed from envy and from care,  
What would we be but what we are?"

When I sate down to write this Preface, it was my intention to have made it more comprehensive; but, thinking that I ought rather to apologise for detaining the reader so long, I will here conclude.

#### POSTSCRIPT

1835

IN the present Volume, as in those that have preceded it, the reader will have found occasionally opinions expressed upon the course of public affairs, and feelings given vent to as national interests excited them. Since nothing, I trust, has been uttered but in the spirit of reflective patriotism, those notices are left to produce their own effect; but, among the many objects of general concern, and the changes going forward, which I have glanced at in verse, are some especially affecting the lower orders of society: in reference to these, I wish here to add a few words in plain prose.

Were I conscious of being able to do justice to those important topics, I might avail myself of the periodical press for offering anonymously my thoughts, such as they are, to the world; but I feel that in procuring attention, they may derive some advantage, however small, from my name, in addition to that of being presented in a less fugitive shape. It is also not impossible that the state of mind which some of the foregoing poems may have produced in the reader, will dispose him to receive more

readily the impression which I desire to make, and to admit the conclusions I would establish.

I. The first thing that presses upon my attention is the Poor-Law Amendment Act. I am aware of the magnitude and complexity of the subject, and the unwearied attention which it has received from men of far wider experience than my own; yet I cannot forbear touching upon one point of it, and to this I will confine myself, though not insensible to the objection which may reasonably be brought against treating a portion of this, or any other, great scheme of civil polity separately from the whole. The point to which I wish to draw the reader's attention is, that *all* persons who cannot find employment, or procure wages sufficient to support the body in health and strength, are entitled to a maintenance by law.

This dictate of humanity is acknowledged in the Report of the Commissioners; but is there not room for apprehension that some of the regulations of the new act have a tendency to render the principle nugatory by difficulties thrown in the way of applying it? If this be so, persons will not be wanting to show it, by examining the provisions of the act in detail,—an attempt which would be quite out of place here; but it will not, therefore, be deemed unbecoming in one who fears that the prudence of the head may, in framing some of those provisions, have supplanted the wisdom of the heart, to enforce a principle which cannot be violated without infringing upon one of the most precious rights of the English people, and opposing one of the most sacred claims of civilised humanity.

There can be no greater error, in this department of legislation, than the belief that this principle does by necessity operate for the degradation of those who claim, or are so circumstanced as to make it likely they may claim, through laws founded upon it, relief or assistance. The direct contrary is the truth: it may be unanswerably maintained that its tendency is to raise, not to depress; by stamping a value upon life, which can belong to it only where the laws have placed men who are willing to work, and yet cannot find employment, above the

necessity of looking for protection against hunger and other natural evils, either to individual and casual charity, to despair and death, or to the breach of law by theft or violence.

And here, as, in the Report of the Commissioners, the fundamental principle has been recognised, I am not at issue with them any farther than I am compelled to believe that their "remedial measures" obstruct the application of it more than the interests of society require.

And, calling to mind the doctrines of political economy which are now prevalent, I cannot forbear to enforce the justice of the principle, and to insist upon its salutary operation.

And first for its justice: If self-preservation be the first law of our nature, would not every one in a state of nature be morally justified in taking to himself that which is indispensable to such preservation, where, by so doing, he would not rob another of that which might be equally indispensable to *his* preservation? And if the value of life be regarded in a right point of view, may it not be questioned whether this right of preserving life, at any expense short of endangering the life of another, does not survive man's entering into the social state; whether this right can be surrendered or forfeited, except when it opposes the divine law, upon any supposition of a social compact, or of any convention for the protection of mere rights of property?

But if it be not safe to touch the abstract question of man's right in a social state to help himself even in the last extremity, may we not still contend for the duty of a christian government, standing *in loco parentis* towards all its subjects, to make such effectual provision, that no one shall be in danger of perishing either through the neglect or harshness of its legislation? Or, waiving this, is it not indisputable that the claim of the state to the allegiance involves the protection of the subject? And, as all rights in one party impose a correlative duty upon another, it follows that the right of the state to require the services of its members, even to the jeoparding of their lives in the common defence, establishes a right in the people (not to be gainsaid by utilitarians and economists) to public sup-

port when from any cause they may be unable to support themselves.

Let us now consider the salutary and benign operation of this principle. Here we must have recourse to elementary feelings of human nature, and to truths which from their very obviousness are apt to be slighted, till they are forced upon our notice by our own sufferings or those of others. In the *Paradise Lost*, Milton represents Adam, after the Fall, as exclaiming, in the anguish of his soul—

"Did I request Thee, Maker, from my clay  
To mould me man; did I solicit Thee  
From darkness to promote me?  
My will  
Concurred not to my being."

Under how many various pressures of misery have men been driven thus, in a strain touching upon impiety, to expostulate with the Creator! and under few so afflictive as when the source and origin of earthly existence have been brought back to the mind by its impending close in the pangs of destitution. But as long as, in our legislation, due weight shall be given to this principle, no man will be forced to bewail the gift of life in hopeless want of the necessities of life.

Englishmen have, therefore, by the progress of civilisation among them, been placed in circumstances more favourable to piety and resignation to the divine will than the inhabitants of other countries, where a like provision has not been established. And as Providence, in this care of our countrymen, acts through a human medium, the objects of that care must, in like manner, be more inclined towards a grateful love of their fellow-men. Thus, also, do stronger ties attach the people to their country, whether while they tread its soil, or, at a distance, think of their native land as an indulgent parent, to whose arms even they who have been imprudent and undervaluing may, like the prodigal son, betake themselves, without fear of being rejected.

Such is the view of the case that would first present itself to a reflective mind; and it is in vain to show, by appeals to experience, in contrast with this view, that provisions founded upon the principle have promoted profaneness of life and disposi-

tions the reverse of philanthropic, by spreading idleness, selfishness, and rapacity: for these evils have arisen, not as an inevitable consequence of the principle, but for want of judgment in framing laws based upon it; and, above all, from faults in the mode of administering the law. The mischief that has grown to such a height from granting relief in cases where proper vigilance would have shown that it was not required, or in bestowing it in undue measure, will be urged by no truly enlightened statesman as a sufficient reason for banishing the principle itself from legislation.

Let us recur to the miserable states of consciousness that it precludes.

There is a story told, by a traveller in Spain, of a female who, by a sudden shock of domestic calamity, was driven out of her senses, and ever after looked up incessantly to the sky, feeling that her fellow-creatures could do nothing for her relief. Can there be Englishmen who, with a good end in view, would, upon system, expose their brother Englishmen to a like necessity of looking upwards only; or downwards to the earth, after it shall contain no spot where the destitute can demand, by civil right, what by right of nature they are entitled to?

Suppose the objects of our sympathy not sunk into this blank despair, but wandering about as strangers in streets and ways, with the hope of succour from casual charity; what have we gained by such a change of scene? Woful is the condition of the famished Northern Indian, dependent, among winter snows, upon the chance-passage of a herd of deer, from which one, if brought down by his rifle-gun, may be made the means of keeping him and his companions alive. As miserable is that of some savage Islander, who, when the land has ceased to afford him sustenance, watches for food which the waves may cast up, or in vain endeavours to extract it from the inexorable deep. But neither of these is in a state of wretchedness comparable to that which is so often endured in civilised society: multitudes, in all ages, have known it, of whom may be said:—

"Homeless, near a thousand homes they stood,  
And near a thousand tables pined, and wanted food."

Justly might I be accused of wasting time in an uncalled-for attempt to excite the feelings of the reader, if systems of political economy, widely spread, did not impugn the principle, and if the safeguards against such extremities were left unimpaired. It is broadly asserted by many, that every man who endeavours to find work *may* find it: were this assertion capable of being verified, there still would remain a question, what kind of work, and how far may the labourer be fit for it? For if sedentary work is to be exchanged for standing, and some light and nice exercise of the fingers, to which an artisan has been accustomed all his life, for severe labour of the arms, the best efforts would turn to little account, and occasion would be given for the unthinking and the unfeeling unwarrantably to reproach those who are put upon such employment as idle, froward, and unworthy of relief, either by law or in any other way! Were this statement correct, there would indeed be an end of the argument, the principle here maintained would be superseded. But, alas! it is far otherwise. That principle, applicable to the benefit of all countries, is indispensable for England, upon whose coast families are perpetually deprived of their support by shipwreck, and where large masses of men are so liable to be thrown out of their ordinary means of gaining bread, by changes in commercial intercourse, subject mainly or solely to the will of foreign powers; by new discoveries in arts and manufactures; and by reckless laws, in conformity with theories of political economy, which, whether right or wrong in the abstract, have proved a scourge to tens of thousands by the abruptness with which they have been carried into practice.

But it is urged,—refuse altogether compulsory relief to the able-bodied, and the number of those who stand in need of relief will steadily diminish through a conviction of an absolute necessity for greater forethought and more prudent care of a man's earnings. Undoubtedly it would, but so also would it, and in a much greater degree, if the legislative provisions were retained, and parochial relief administered under the care of the upper classes, as it ought to be.

For it has been invariably found, that wherever the funds have been raised and applied under the superintendence of gentlemen and substantial proprietors, acting in vestries and as overseers, pauperism has diminished accordingly. Proper care in that quarter would effectually check what is felt in some districts to be one of the worst evils in the poor law system, viz. the readiness of small and needy proprietors to join in imposing rates that seemingly subject them to great hardships, while, in fact, this is done with a mutual understanding that the relief each is ready to bestow upon his still poorer neighbours will be granted to himself, or his relatives, should it hereafter be applied for.

But let us look to inner sentiments of a nobler quality, in order to know what we have to build upon. Affecting proofs occur in every one's experience, who is acquainted with the unfortunate and the indigent, of their unwillingness to derive their subsistence from aught but their own funds or labour, or to be indebted to parochial assistance for the attainment of any object, however dear to them. A case was reported, the other day, from a coroner's inquest, of a pair who, through the space of four years, had carried about their dead infant from house to house, and from lodging to lodging, as their necessities drove them, rather than ask the parish to bear the expense of its interment:—the poor creatures lived in the hope of one day being able to bury their child at their own cost. It must have been heart-rendering to see and hear the mother, who had been called upon to account for the state in which the body was found, make this deposition. By some, judging coldly, if not harshly, this conduct might be imputed to an unwarrantable pride, as she and her husband had, it is true, been once in prosperity. But examples, where the spirit of independence works with equal strength, though not with like miserable accompaniments, are frequently to be found even yet among the humblest peasantry and mechanics. There is not, then, sufficient cause for doubting that a like sense of honour may be revived among the people, and their ancient habits of independence restored, without resorting to those severi-

ties which the new Poor Law Act has introduced.

But even if the surfaces of things only are to be examined, we have a right to expect that lawgivers should take into account the various tempers and dispositions of mankind: while some are led, by the existence of a legislative provision, into idleness and extravagance, the economical virtues might be cherished in others by the knowledge that, if all their efforts fail, they have in the Poor Laws a "refuge from the storm and a shadow from the heat." Despondency and distraction are no friends to prudence: the springs of industry will relax, if cheerfulness be destroyed by anxiety; without hope men become reckless, and have a sullen pride in adding to the heap of their own wretchedness. He who feels that he is abandoned by his fellow-men will be almost irresistibly driven to care little for himself; will lose his self-respect accordingly, and with that loss what remains to him of virtue?

With all due deference to the particular experience and general intelligence of the individuals who framed the Act, and of those who in and out of parliament have approved of and supported it, it may be said that it proceeds too much upon the presumption that it is a labouring man's own fault if he be not, as the phrase is, beforehand with the world. But the most prudent are liable to be thrown back by sickness, cutting them off from labour, and causing to them expense: and who but has observed how distress creeps upon multitudes without misconduct of their own; and merely from a gradual fall in the price of labour, without a correspondent one in the price of provisions; so that men who may have ventured upon the marriage state with a fair prospect of maintaining their families in comfort and happiness, see them reduced to a pittance which no effort of theirs can increase? Let it be remembered, also, that there are thousands with whom vicious habits of expense are not the cause why they do not store up their gains; but they are generous and kind-hearted, and ready to help their kindred and friends; moreover, they have a faith in Providence that those who have been prompt to assist others, will not be left destitute, should they them-

selves come to need. By acting from these blended feelings, numbers have rendered themselves incapable of standing up against a sudden reverse. Nevertheless, these men, in common with all who have the misfortune to be in want, if many theorists had their wish, would be thrown upon one or other of those three sharp points of condition before adverted to, from which the intervention of law has hitherto saved them.

All that has been said tends to show how the principle contended for makes the gift of life more valuable, and has, it may be hoped, led to the conclusion that its legitimate operation is to make men worthier of that gift: in other words, not to degrade but to exalt human nature. But the subject must not be dismissed without adverting to the indirect influence of the same principle upon the moral sentiments of a people among whom it is embodied in law. In our criminal jurisprudence there is a maxim, deservedly eulogised, that it is better that ten guilty persons should escape, than that one innocent man should suffer; so, also, might it be maintained, with regard to the Poor Laws, that it is better for the interests of humanity among the people at large, that ten undeserving should partake of the funds provided, than that one morally good man, through want of relief, should either have his principles corrupted or his energies destroyed; than that such a one should either be driven to do wrong or be cast to the earth in utter hopelessness. In France the English maxim of criminal jurisprudence is reversed; there, it is deemed better that ten innocent men should suffer than one guilty escape: in France there is no universal provision for the poor; and we may judge of the small value set upon human life in the metropolis of that country, by merely noticing the disrespect with which, after death, the body is treated, not by the thoughtless vulgar, but in schools of anatomy, presided over by men allowed to be, in their own art and in physical science, among the most enlightened in the world. In the East, where countries are overrun with population as with a weed, infinitely more respect is shown to the remains of the deceased; and what a bitter mockery is it, that this insensibility should be found where

civil polity is so busy in minor regulations, and ostentatiously careful to gratify the luxurious propensities, whether social or intellectual, of the multitude! Irreligion is, no doubt, much concerned with this offensive disrespect shown to the bodies of the dead in France; but it is mainly attributable to the state in which so many of the living are left by the absence of compulsory provision for the indigent so humanely established by the law of England.

Sights of abject misery, perpetually recurring, harden the heart of the community. In the perusal of history and of works of fiction we are not, indeed, unwilling to have our commiseration excited by such objects of distress as they present to us; but, in the concerns of real life, men know that such emotions are not given to be indulged for their own sakes: there, the conscience declares to them that sympathy must be followed by action; and if there exist a previous conviction that the power to relieve is utterly inadequate to the demand, the eye shrinks from communication with wretchedness, and pity and compassion languish, like any other qualities that are deprived of their natural aliment. Let these considerations be duly weighed by those who trust to the hope that an increase of private charity, with all its advantages of superior discrimination, would more than compensate for the abandonment of those principles, the wisdom of which has been here insisted upon. How discouraging, also, would be the sense of injustice, which could not fail to arise in the minds of the well-disposed, if the burden of supporting the poor, a burden of which the selfish have hitherto by compulsion borne a share, should now, or hereafter, be thrown exclusively upon the benevolent.

By having put an end to the Slave Trade and Slavery, the British people are exalted in the scale of humanity; and they cannot but feel so, if they look into themselves, and duly consider their relation to God and their fellow-creatures. That was a noble advance; but a retrograde movement will assuredly be made, if ever the principle which has been here defended should be either avowedly abandoned or but ostensibly retained.

But, after all, there may be a little reason



to apprehend permanent injury from any experiment that may be tried. On the one side will be human nature rising up in her own defence, and on the other prudential selfishness acting to the same purpose, from a conviction that, without a compulsory provision for the exigencies of the labouring multitude, that degree of ability to regulate the price of labour, which is indispensable for the reasonable interest of arts and manufactures, cannot, in Great Britain, be upheld.

II. In a poem of the foregoing collection allusion is made to the state of the workmen congregated in manufactories. In order to relieve many of the evils to which that class of society are subject, and to establish a better harmony between them and their employers, it would be well to repeal such laws as prevent the formation of joint-stock companies. There are, no doubt, many and great obstacles to the formation and salutary working of these societies, inherent in the mind of those whom they would obviously benefit. But the combinations of masters to keep down, unjustly, the price of labour would be fairly checked by them, as far as they were practicable; they would encourage economy, inasmuch as they would enable a man to draw profit from his savings, by investing them in buildings or machinery for processes of manufacture with which he was habitually connected. His little capital would then be working for him while he was at rest or asleep; he would more clearly perceive the necessity of capital for carrying on great works; he would better learn to respect the larger portions of it in the hands of others; he would be less tempted to join in unjust combinations; and, for the sake of his own property, if not for higher reasons, he would be slow to promote local disturbance or endanger public tranquillity; he would, at least, be loth to act in that way *knowingly*: for it is not to be denied that such societies might be nurseries of opinions unfavourable to a mixed constitution of government, like that of Great Britain. The democratic and republican spirit which they might be apt to foster would not, however, be dangerous in itself, but only as it might act without

being sufficiently counterbalanced, either by landed proprietorship, or by a Church extending itself so as to embrace an ever-growing and ever-shifting population of mechanics and artisans. But if the tendencies of such societies would be to make the men prosper who might belong to them, rulers and legislators should rejoice in the result, and do their duty to the state by upholding and extending the influence of that Church to which it owes, in so great a measure, its safety, its prosperity, and its glory.

This, in the temper of the present times, may be difficult, but it is become indispensable, since large towns in great numbers have sprung up, and others have increased tenfold, with little or no dependence upon the gentry and the landed proprietors; and apart from those mitigated feudal institutions, which, till of late, have acted so powerfully upon the composition of the House of Commons. Now it may be affirmed that, in quarters where there is not an attachment to the Church, or the landed aristocracy, and a pride in supporting them, *there* the people will dislike both, and be ready, upon such incitements as are perpetually recurring, to join in attempts to overthrow them. There is no neutral ground here: from want of due attention to the state of society in large towns and manufacturing districts, and ignorance or disregard of these obvious truths, innumerable well-meaning persons became zealous supporters of a Reform Bill, the qualities and powers of which, whether destructive or constructive, they would otherwise have been afraid of; and even the framers of that bill, swayed as they might be by party resentments and personal ambition, could not have gone so far, had not they too been lamentably ignorant or neglectful of the same truths both of fact and philosophy.

But let that pass; and let no opponent of the bill be tempted to compliment his own foresight, by exaggerating the mischiefs and dangers that have sprung from it: let not time be wasted in profitless regrets; and let those party distinctions vanish to their very names that have separated men who, whatever course they may have pursued, have ever had a bond of

union in the wish to save the limited nonarchy and those other institutions that have, under Providence, rendered for so long a period of time this country the happiest and worthiest of which there is any record since the foundation of civil society.

III. A philosophic mind is best pleased when looking at religion in its spiritual bearing; as a guide of conduct, a solace under affliction, and a support amid the instabilities of mortal life: but the Church having been forcibly brought by political considerations to my notice, while treating of the labouring classes, I cannot forbear saying a few words upon that momentous topic.

There is a loud clamour for extensive change in that department. The clamour would be entitled to more respect if they who are the most eager to swell it with their voices were not generally the most ignorant of the real state of the Church and the service it renders to the community. *Reform* is the word employed. Let us pause and consider what sense it is apt to carry, and how things are confounded by a lax use of it. The great religious Reformation, in the sixteenth century, did not profess to be a new construction, but a restoration of something fallen into decay, or put out of sight. That familiar and justifiable use of the word seems to have paved the way for fallacies with respect to the term reform, which it is difficult to escape from. Were we to speak of improvement and the correction of abuses, we should run less risk of being deceived ourselves or of misleading others. We should be less likely to fall blindly into the belief that the change demanded is a renewal of something that has existed before, and that, therefore, we have experience on our side; nor should we be equally tempted to beg the question that the change for which we are eager must be advantageous. From generation to generation, men are the dupes of words; and it is painful to observe that so many of our species are most tenacious of those opinions which they have formed with the least consideration. They who are the readiest to meddle with public affairs, whether in church or state, fly to

generalities, that they may be eased from the trouble of thinking about particulars; and thus is deputed to mechanical instrumentality the work which vital knowledge only can do well.

"Abolish pluralities, have a resident incumbent in every parish," is a favourite cry; but, without adverting to other obstacles in the way of this specious scheme, it may be asked what benefit would accrue from its *indiscriminate* adoption to counterbalance the harm it would introduce, by nearly extinguishing the order of curates, unless the revenues of the church should grow with the population, and be greatly increased in many thinly-peopled districts, especially among the parishes of the North.

The order of curates is so beneficial, that some particular notice of it seems to be required in this place. For a church poor as, relatively to the numbers of people, that of England is, and probably will continue to be, it is no small advantage to have youthful servants, who will work upon the wages of hope and expectation. Still more advantageous is it to have, by means of this order, young men scattered over the country, who being more detached from the temporal concerns of the benefice, have more leisure for improvement and study, and are less subject to be brought into secular collision with those who are under their spiritual guardianship. The curate, if he reside at a distance from the incumbent, undertakes the requisite responsibilities of a temporal kind, in that modified way which prevents him, as a new-comer, from being charged with selfishness: while it prepares him for entering upon a benefice of his own with something of a suitable experience. If he should act under and in co-operation with a resident incumbent, the gain is mutual. His studies will probably be assisted; and his training, managed by a superior, will not be liable to relapse in matters of prudence, seemliness, or in any of the highest cares of his functions; and by way of return for these benefits to the pupil, it will often happen that the zeal of a middle-aged or declining incumbent will be revived, by being in near communion with the ardour of youth, when his own efforts may have languished through a melancholy consciousness that they have

not produced as much good among his flock as, when he first entered upon the charge, he fondly hoped.

Let one remark, and that not the least important, he added. A curate, entering for the first time upon his office, comes from college after a course of expense, and with such inexperience in the use of money that in his new situation he is apt to fall un-awares into pecuniary difficulties. If this happens to him, much more likely is it to happen to the youthful incumbent, whose relations, to his parishioners and to society, are more complicated; and, his income being larger and independent of another, a costlier style of living is required of him by public opinion. If embarrassment should ensue, and with that unavoidably some loss of respectability, his future usefulness will be proportionably impaired: not so with the curate, for he can easily remove and start afresh with a stock of experience and an unblemished reputation; whereas the early indiscretions of an incumbent being rarely forgotten, may be impediments to the efficacy of his ministry for the remainder of his life. The same observations would apply with equal force to doctrine. A young minister is liable to errors, from his notions being either too lax or overstrained. In both cases it would prove injurious that the error should be remembered, after study and reflection, with advancing years, shall have brought him to a clearer discernment of the truth, and better judgment in the application of it.

It must be acknowledged that, among the regulations of ecclesiastical polity, none at first view are more attractive than that which prescribes for every parish a resident incumbent. How agreeable to picture to one's self, as has been done by poets and romance-writers, from Chaucer down to Goldsmith, a man devoted to his ministerial office, with not a wish or a thought ranging beyond the circuit of its cares! Nor is it in poetry and fiction only that such characters are found; they are scattered, it is hoped not sparingly, over real life, especially in sequestered and rural districts, where there is but small influx of new inhabitants, and little change of occupation. The spirit of the Gospel, unaided by acquisitions of profane learning and experience in the

world,—that spirit and the obligations of the sacred office may, in such situations, suffice to effect most of what is needful. But for the complex state of society that prevails in England much more is required, both in large towns and in many extensive districts of the country. A minister there should not only be irreproachable in manners and morals, but accomplished in learning as far as is possible without sacrifice of the least of his pastoral duties. As necessary, perhaps more so, is it that he should be a citizen as well as a scholar; thoroughly acquainted with the structure of society and the constitution of civil government, and able to reason upon both with the most expert; all ultimately in order to support the truths of Christianity and to diffuse its blessings.

A young man coming fresh from the place of his education cannot have brought with him these accomplishments; and if the scheme of equalising church incomes, which many advisers are much bent upon, be realised, so that there should be little or no secular inducement for a clergyman to desire a removal from the spot where he may chance to have been first set down, surely not only opportunities for obtaining the requisite qualifications would be diminished, but the motives for desiring to obtain them would be proportionably weakened. And yet these qualifications are indispensable for the diffusion of that knowledge by which alone the political philosophy of the New Testament can be rightly expounded, and its precepts adequately enforced. In these times, when the press is daily exercising so great a power over the minds of the people, for wrong or for right as may happen, *that* preacher ranks among the first of benefactors who, without stooping to the direct treatment of current politics and passing events, can furnish infallible guidance through the delusions that surround them; and who, appealing to the sanctions of Scripture, may place the grounds of its injunctions in so clear a light that disaffection shall cease to be cultivated as a laudable propensity, and loyalty cleansed from the dishonour of a blind and prostrate obedience.

It is not, however, in regard to civic duties alone, that this knowledge in a minister of the Gospel is important; it is

still more so for softening and subduing private and personal discontents. In all places, and at all times, men have gratuitously troubled themselves, because their survey of the dispensations of Providence has been partial and narrow; but now that readers are so greatly multiplied, men judge as they are *taught*, and repinings are engendered everywhere, by imputations being cast upon the government; and are prolonged or aggravated by being ascribed to misconduct or injustice in rulers, when the individual himself only is in fault. If a Christian pastor be competent to deal with these humours, as they may be dealt with, and by no members of society so successfully, both from more frequent and more favourable opportunities of intercourse, and by aid of the authority with which he speaks; he will be a teacher of moderation, a dispenser of the wisdom that blunts approaching distress by submission to God's will, and lightens, by patience, grievances which cannot be removed.

We live in times when nothing, of public good at least, is generally acceptable, but what we believe can be traced to preconceived intention and specific acts and formal contrivances of human understanding. A Christian instructor thoroughly accomplished would be a standing restraint upon such presumptuousness of judgment, by impressing the truth that

"In the unreasoning progress of the world  
A wiser spirit is at work for us,  
A better eye than ours." *MS.*

Revelation points to the purity and peace of a future world; but our sphere of duty is upon earth; and the relations of impure and conflicting things to each other must be understood, or we shall be perpetually going wrong, in all but goodness of intention; and goodness of intention will itself relax through frequent disappointment. How desirable, then, is it, that a minister of the Gospel should be versed in the knowledge of existing facts, and be accustomed to a wide range of social experience! Nor is it less desirable for the purpose of counterbalancing and tempering in his own mind that ambition with which spiritual power is so apt to be tainted as any other species of power which men covet or possess.

It must be obvious that the scope of the argument is to discourage an attempt which would introduce into the Church of England an equality of income and station, upon the model of that of Scotland. The sounder part of the Scottish nation know what good their ancestors derived from their church, and feel how deeply the living generation is indebted to it. They respect and love it, as accommodated in so great a measure to a comparatively poor country, through the far greater portion of which prevails a uniformity of employment; but the acknowledged deficiency of theological learning among the clergy of that church is easily accounted for by this very equality. What else may be wanting there it would be unpleasant to inquire, and might prove invidious to determine: one thing, however, is clear; that in all countries the temporalities of the Church Establishment should bear an analogy to the state of society, otherwise it cannot diffuse its influence through the whole community. In a country so rich and luxurious as England, the character of its clergy must unavoidably sink, and their influence be everywhere impaired, if individuals from the upper ranks, and men of leading talents, are to have no inducements to enter into that body but such as are purely spiritual. And this "tinge of secularity" is no reproach to the clergy, nor does it imply a deficiency of spiritual endowments. Parents and guardians, looking forward to sources of honourable maintenance for their children and wards, often direct their thoughts early towards the church, being determined partly by outward circumstances, and partly by indications of seriousness or intellectual fitness. It is natural that a boy or youth, with such a prospect before him, should turn his attention to those studies, and be led into those habits of reflection, which will in some degree tend to prepare him for the duties he is hereafter to undertake. As he draws nearer to the time when he will be called to these duties, he is both led and compelled to examine the Scriptures. He becomes more and more sensible of their truth. Devotion grows in him; and what might begin in temporal considerations, will end (as in a majority of instances we trust it does) in a spiritual-mindedness not unworthy

of that Gospel, the lessons of which he is to teach, and the faith of which he is to inculcate. Not inappositely may be here repeated an observation which, from its obviousness and importance, must have been frequently made, viz. that the impoverishing of the clergy, and bringing their incomes much nearer to a level, would not cause them to become less worldly-minded: the emoluments, howsoever reduced, would be as eagerly sought for, but by men from lower classes in society; men who, by their manners, habits, abilities, and the scanty measure of their attainments, would unavoidably be less fitted for their station, and less competent to discharge its duties.

Visionary notions have in all ages been afloat upon the subject of best providing for the clergy; notions which have been sincerely entertained by good men, with a view to the improvement of that order, and eagerly caught at and dwelt upon by the designing, for its degradation and disparagement. Some are beguiled by what they call the *voluntary system*, not seeing (what stares one in the face at the very threshold) that they who stand in most need of religious instruction are unconscious of the want, and therefore cannot reasonably be expected to make any sacrifices in order to supply it. Will the licentious, the sensual, and the depraved, take from the means of their gratifications and pursuits, to support a discipline that cannot advance without uprooting the trees that bear the fruit which they devour so greedily? Will *they* pay the price of that seed whose harvest is to be reaped in an invisible world? A voluntary system for the religious exigencies of a people numerous and circumstanced as we are! Not more absurd would it be to expect that a knot of boys should draw upon the pittance of their pocket-money to build schools, or out of the abundance of their discretion be able to select fit masters to teach and keep them in order! Some, who clearly perceive the incompetence and folly of such a scheme for the agricultural part of the people, nevertheless think it feasible in large towns, where the rich might subscribe for the religious instruction of the poor. Alas! they know little of the thick darkness that spreads over the streets and alleys of our large towns. The parish of Lambeth, a

few years since, contained not more than one church and three or four small proprietary chapels, while dissenting chapels of every denomination were still more scantily found there; yet the inhabitants of the parish amounted at that time to upwards of 50,000. Were the parish church and the chapels of the Establishment existing there an *impediment* to the spread of the Gospel among that mass of people? Who shall dare to say so? But if any one, in the face of the fact which has just been stated, and in opposition to authentic reports to the same effect from various other quarters, should still contend that a voluntary system is sufficient for the spread and maintenance of religion, we would ask what kind of religion? wherein would it differ, among the many, from deplorable fanaticism?

For the preservation of the Church Establishment, all men, whether they belong to it or not, could they perceive their true interest, would be strenuous; but how inadequate are its provisions for the needs of the country! and how much is it to be regretted that, while its zealous friends yield to alarms on account of the hostility of dissent, they should so much overrate the danger to be apprehended from that quarter, and almost overlook the fact that hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen, though formally and nominally of the Church of England, never enter her places of worship, neither have they communication with her ministers! This deplorable state of things was partly produced by a decay of zeal among the rich and influential, and partly by a want of due expansive power in the constitution of the Establishment as regulated by law. Private benefactors, in their efforts to build and endow churches, have been frustrated or too much impeded by legal obstacles; these, where they are unreasonable or unfitted for the times, ought to be removed; and, keeping clear of intolerance and injustice, means should be used to render the presence and powers of the church commensurate with the wants of a shifting and still-increasing population.

This cannot be effected, unless the English Government vindicate the truth that, as her church exists for the benefit of all (though not in equal degree), whether

of her communion or not, all should be made to contribute to its support. If this ground be abandoned, cause will be given to fear that a moral wound may be inflicted upon the heart of the English people, for which a remedy cannot be speedily provided by the utmost efforts which the members of the Church will themselves be able to make.

But let the friends of the church be of good courage. Powers are at work, by which, under Divine Providence, she may be strengthened and the sphere of her usefulness extended; not by alterations in her Liturgy, accommodated to this or that demand of finical taste, nor by cutting off this or that from her articles or Canons, to which the scrupulous or the overweening may object. Covert schism, and open nonconformity, would survive after alterations, however promising in the eyes of those whose subtilty had been exercised in making them. Latitudinarianism is the parhelion of liberty of conscience, and will ever successfully lay claim to a divided worship. Among Presbyterians, Socinians, Baptists, and Independents, there will always be found numbers who will tire of their several creeds, and some will come over to the Church. Conventicles may disappear, congregations in each denomination may fall into decay or be broken up, but the conquests which the National Church ought chiefly to aim at, lie among the thousands and tens of thousands of the unhappy outcasts who grow up with no religion at all. The wants of these cannot but be feelingly remembered. Whatever may be the disposition of the new constituencies under the reformed parliament, and the course which the men of their choice may be inclined or compelled to follow, it may be confidently hoped that individuals, acting in their private capacities, will endeavour to make up for the deficiencies of the legislature. Is it too much to expect that proprietors of large estates, where the inhabitants are without religious instruction, or where it is sparingly supplied, will deem it their duty to take part in this good work; and that thriving manufacturers and merchants will, in their several neighbourhoods, be sensible of the like obligation, and act upon it with generous rivalry?

Moreover, the force of public opinion is rapidly increasing, and some may bend to it, who are not so happy as to be swayed by a higher motive; especially they who derive large incomes from lay-impropriations in tracts of country where ministers are few and meagrely provided for. A claim still stronger may be acknowledged by those who, round their superb habitations, or elsewhere, walk over vast estates which were lavished upon their ancestors by royal favouritism or purchased at insignificant prices after church-spoliation; such proprietors, though not conscience-stricken (there is no call for that), may be prompted to make a return for which their tenantry and dependents will learn to bless their names. An impulse has been given; an accession of means from these several sources, co-operating with a well-considered change in the distribution of some parts of the property at present possessed by the church, a change scrupulously founded upon due respect to law and justice, will, we trust, bring about so much of what her friends desire, that the rest may be calmly waited for, with thankfulness for what shall have been obtained.

Let it not be thought unbecoming in a layman to have treated at length a subject with which the clergy are more intimately conversant. All may, without impropriety, speak of what deeply concerns all; nor need an apology be offered for going over ground which has been trod before so ably and so often: without pretending, however, to anything of novelty, either in matter or manner, something may have been offered to view which will save the writer from the imputation of having little to recommend his labour but goodness of intention.

It was with reference to thoughts and feelings expressed in verse, that I entered upon the above notices, and with verse I will conclude. The passage is extracted from my MSS. written above thirty years ago: it turns upon the individual dignity which humbleness of social condition does not preclude, but frequently promotes. It has no direct bearing upon clubs for the discussion of public affairs, nor upon political or trade-unions; but if a single workman—who, being a member of one of those clubs, runs the risk of becoming an

agitator, or who, being enrolled in a union, must be left without a will of his own, and therefore a slave—should read these lines, and be touched by them, I should indeed rejoice, and little would I care for losing credit as a poet with intemperate critics, who think differently from me upon political philosophy or public measures, if the sober-minded admit that, in general views, my affections have been moved, and my imagination exercised, under and *for* the guidance of reason.

" Here might I pause, and bend in reverence  
To Nature, and the power of human minds ;  
To men as they are men within themselves.  
How oft high service is performed within,  
When all the external man is rude in show ;  
Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,  
But a mere mountain chapel that protects  
Its simple worshippers from sun and shower !  
Of these, said I, shall be my song ; of these,  
If future years mature me for the task,  
Will I record the praises, making verse  
Deal boldly with substantial things—in truth  
And sanctity of passion, speak of these,  
That justice may be done, obeisance paid  
Where it is due. Thus haply shall I teach,  
Inspire, through unadulterated ears  
Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope ; my theme  
No other than the very heart of man,  
As found among the best of those who live,  
Not unexalted by religious faith,  
Nor uninformed by books, good books, though few,

In Nature's presence : thence may I select  
Sorrow that is not sorrow, but delight,  
And miserable love that is not pain  
To hear of, for the glory that redounds  
Therefrom to human kind, and what we are.  
Be mine to follow with no timid step  
Where knowledge leads me ; it shall be my pride  
That I have dared to tread this holy ground,  
Speaking no dream, but things oracular,  
Matter not lightly to be heard by those  
Who to the letter of the outward promise  
Do read the invisible soul ; by men adroit  
In speech, and for communion with the world  
Accomplished, minds whose faculties are then  
Most active when they are most eloquent,  
And elevated most when most admired.  
Men may be found of other mould than these :  
Who are their own upholders, to themselves  
Encouragement and energy, and will ;  
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words  
As native passion dictates. Others, too,  
There are, among the walks of homely life,  
Still higher, men for contemplation framed ;  
Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase :  
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink  
Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse.  
Theirs is the language of the heavens, the power,  
The thought, the image, and the silent joy :  
Words are but under-agents in their souls ;  
When they are grasping with their greatest  
strength  
They do not breathe among them ; this I speak  
In gratitude to God, who feeds our hearts  
For his own service, knoweth, loveth us,  
When we are unregarded by the world."

# THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORDSWORTH:

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL LIST of the WRITINGS in VERSE and PROSE of WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, Published from 1793 to 1888; arranged in Chronological Order, with NOTES; also a LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES and BEST CRITICAL ARTICLES. Compiled by J. R. TUTIN.

*"He is one of the very chief glories of English Poetry; and by nothing is England so glorious as by her poetry."*—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

[PREFATORY NOTE.—My plan in preparing the following list of Editions of Wordsworth's Verse and Prose has been to include not only every distinctive Edition published during the Poet's life, but every authoritative and worthy edition published since his death. Cheap reprints (inedited) and School Editions of Selections I have not thought it necessary to enumerate.]

1

AN EVENING WALK. An Epistle; in verse. Addressed to a Young Lady, from the Lakes of the North of England. By W. Wordsworth, B.A., of St. John's, Cambridge. London: printed for J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church-yard, 1793. 4to. Boards.

*Collation.*—Title; Argument and Errata, 2 leaves; pp. 27.

2

DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES. In verse. Taken during a pedestrian tour in the Italian, Grison, Swiss, and Savoyard Alps. By W. Wordsworth, B.A., of St. John's, Cambridge. *Loca pastorum deserta atque otia dia.*—*Lucret.* *Castella in tumulis—Et longe saltus lateque vacantes.*—*Virgil.* London: printed for J. Johnson, St. Paul's Churchyard, 1793. 4to. Boards.

*Collation.*—Title; Errata, 1 leaf; Dedication to the Rev. Robert Jones, 1 leaf; Argument, 1 leaf; pp. 55.

3

LYRICAL BALLADS, with a few other Poems. Joseph Cottle, Bristol, 1798. 12mo. Boards.

LYRICAL BALLADS, with a few other Poems. London: printed for J. & A. Arch, Gracechurch Street, 1798. 12mo. Boards.

*Collation.*—Title and Advertisement, pp. i-v; Text, pp. 1-210.

*Notes.*—These are both the same Edition, but the larger portion of the copies bear the name of Arch as publisher, the Bristol publisher having sold to Arch the greater number of copies printed.

Four of the poems in this Edition were by S. T. Coleridge. Their titles are:—"The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere;" "The Foster-Mother's Tale;" "The Nightingale, a Conversational Poem;" and "The Dungeon."

4

LYRICAL BALLADS, with other Poems. In two volumes. By W. Wordsworth. *Quam nihil ad genus, Papiniane,*



tuum! Vol. I. Second Edition. [Vol. II.] London: printed for T. N. Longman and O. Rees, Paternoster Row, by Biggs and Co., Bristol. 1800. 12mo. Paper boards.

*Collation.*—Vol. I.—pp. xlv, 215 (including five pages of Notes, unnumbered); Title and Contents, pp. i-iv; Preface, pp. v-xlv; Text of Poems, pp. 1-210; Notes, pp. 211-215. Vol. II.—pp. iv, 228; Title and Contents, pp. i-iv; Text, pp. 1-225; Notes, pp. 226-7; Errata list, p. 228.

*Notes.*—In the first volume of this Edition there is one poem (by Coleridge) which is not included in the Edition of 1798. It is entitled "Love." The second volume is a first Edition, the poems it contains being here printed for the first time. The lengthy preface given in Volume I. is the original form in which Wordsworth's poetical theory was expressed. It was included in the 1802 and 1805 Editions of Lyrical Ballads, and, in an expanded form, in every Collective Edition of his poems.

## 5

LYRICAL BALLADS, with Pastoral and other Poems. In two volumes. By W. Wordsworth. *Quam nihil ad genium, Papiniane, tuum!* Third Edition. London: printed for T. N. Longman & O. Rees, Paternoster-Row, by Biggs and Cottle, Crane-Court, Fleet-Street. 1802. 12mo. Boards.

*Collation.*—Vol. I.—pp. lxiv, 200, and 2 leaves of Notes. Vol. II.—Contents, 1 leaf; pp. 247; and 1 leaf Notes.

*Notes.*—This Edition is mainly a reproduction of the two volumes of 1800; there is additional matter in the preface, which makes it 24 pages longer than in the previous Edition; and there are a few variations of text. These volumes were republished in Philadelphia, U.S.A., in one volume in 1802.

## 6

LYRICAL BALLADS, with Pastoral and other Poems. In two volumes. By W. Wordsworth. *Quam nihil ad genium, Papiniane, tuum!* Fourth Edition. London: printed for Longman, Hurst,

Rees, & Orme, by R. Taylor and Co., 38 Shoe Lane. 1805. 12mo. Boards.

*Collation.*—Vol. I.—pp. lxiv, 200; Title, Contents, and Preface, pp. i-lxiv; Text, pp. 1-200; Notes, 1 leaf. Vol. II.—pp. iv, 248; Title and Contents, 2 leaves; Text and Notes, pp. 1-248.

*Note.*—A reprint of the 1802 Edition, with a few slight variations of text.

## 7

POEMS, in two volumes. By William Wordsworth, Author of the Lyrical Ballads. *Posterius graviore sono tibi Musa loquetur Nostra: dabunt cum securos mihi tempora fructus.* Vol. I. [Vol. II.] London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, Paternoster Row. 1807. 12mo. Paper boards.

*Collation.*—Vol. I. pp. viii (unnumbered), 158; Titles and Contents, pp. i-viii; Poems, pp. 1-152; Notes, 153-158. Vol. II.—pp. viii (unnumbered), 170; Titles and Contents, pp. i-viii; Poems, pp. 1-158; Notes, pp. 159-170.

## 8

CONCERNING THE RELATIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN, SPAIN, AND PORTUGAL, TO EACH OTHER, AND TO THE COMMON ENEMY, AT THIS CRISIS; and specifically as affected by the Convention of Cintra: *The whole brought to the test of those principles by which alone the Independence and Freedom of Nations can be Preserved or Recovered.* Qui didicit patriæ quid debeat;—Quod sit conscripti, quod judicis officium; quæ Partes in bellum missi ducis. By William Wordsworth. London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, Paternoster-Row. 1809. 8vo.

*Collation.*—Pp. 216; Appendix, pp. 193-216.

## 9

THE EXCURSION, being a portion of The Recluse, a Poem. By William Wordsworth. London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster Row. 1814. 4to. Paper boards.

*Collation.*—Pp. xx, 447; Titles, Dedictory Sonnet, and Preface, pp. i-xiv; Text of Poem, pp. 1-423; Errata leaf (inserted, unpagged); Summary of Contents, pp. xv-xx (inserted here in error); Notes (including "Essay on Epitaphs"), pp. 431-447.

*Note.*—The "Essay on Epitaphs" inserted in the Notes to this volume was originally published in *The Friend* February 22, 1810.

## 10

POEMS BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: including Lyrical Ballads, and the Miscellaneous Pieces of the Author. With additional Poems, a new Preface, and a Supplementary Essay. In two volumes. Vol. I. [Vol. II.] London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster Row. 1815. Demy 8vo. Paper boards.

*Collation.*—Vol. I.—pp. lii, 375; Title, Dedication (to Sir George Beaumont), Preface, Contents, and Errata and Corrections (to both volumes), pp. i-lii; Poems, pp. 1-337; Notes p. 339; Essay, pp. 341-375. Vol. II.—pp. ii, 440; Title, pp. i-ii; Poems, pp. 1-355; Notes, pp. 357-361; Preface (to "Lyrical Ballads"), pp. 363-440.

*Notes.*—This is the first *collected* Edition (to date) of Wordsworth's Poems, excluding "The Excursion." In it the poet for the first time arranges the pieces under various headings, viz. "Poems referring to the Period of Childhood," "Juvenile Pieces," "Poems founded on the Affections," etc.

Facing title of Vol. I. is an Engraving by Bromley from a picture by Sir George Beaumont; Vol. II. has an Engraving of Peel Castle after the same painter.

## 11

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE; or The Fate of the Nortons. A Poem. By William Wordsworth. London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster-row, by James Ballantyne and Co., Edinburgh. 1815. 4to. Boards.

*Collation.*—Pp. xi, 162; Title, Advertisement, Mottoes, and Dedictory Verses

("In trellis'd shed"), pp. i-xi; Text, pp. 1-138; Notes, pp. 139-162.

*Notes.*—The poem "The Force of Prayer" follows the "White Doe"; and facing title is an Engraving by Bromley from a painting by Sir George Beaumont.

## 12

A LETTER TO A FRIEND OF ROBERT BURNS: occasioned by an intended republication of the account of the Life of Burns, by Dr. Currie; and of the Selection made by him from his Letters. By William Wordsworth. London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster Row. 1816. 8vo.

*Collation.*—Pp. 37.

## 13

THANKSGIVING ODE, January 18, 1816. With other short Pieces, chiefly referring to Recent Public Events. By William Wordsworth. London: printed by Thomas Davison, Whitefriars; for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster-Row. 1816. Demy 8vo.

*Collation.*—Pp. ix, 52; Title and Advertisement, pp. i-ix; Contents, p. xii; Poems, pp. 1-52.

## 14

TWO ADDRESSES TO THE FREEHOLDERS OF WESTMORELAND. Kendal: Printed by Airey and Bellingham, 1818. 8vo.

*Collation.*—Pp. 74, and 2 leaves of Notes.

## 15

PETER BELL, a tale in verse, by William Wordsworth. London: Printed by Strahan and Spottiswoode, Printers Street; for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster Row. 1819. Demy 8vo. Boards.

*Collation.*—Pp. vii, 88.

*Note.*—Facing title there is an Engraving by Bromley from a painting by Sir George Beaumont. In addition to "Peter Bell," the volume contains four sonnets.

## 16

THE WAGGONER, a Poem, to which are added, Sonnets. By William Words-

worth. "*What's in a NAME?* Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Cæsar." London: printed by Strahan & Spottiswoode, Printers-Street, for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, & Brown, Paternoster-Row, 1819. Demy 8vo. Boards.

*Collation*.—Pp. iv, 68; Title and Dedication, pp. i-iv; Poems, pp. 5-68.

## 17

PETER BELL, A Tale in Verse, by William Wordsworth. Second Edition. London: printed by Strahan and Spottiswoode, Printers-Street, for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster-Row. 1819. Demy 8vo. Boards.

*Collation*.—Same as No. 15.

*Notes*.—The Note to No. 15 applies also to this second Edition. There are a few variations of text (in "Peter Bell") from the previous issue, and only the first and second Editions contain the oft-quoted stanza—

"Is it a party in a parlour?  
Cramm'd just as they on earth were cramm'd—  
Some sipping punch, some sipping tea,  
But, as you by their faces see,  
All silent and all damn'd!"

## 18

THE RIVER DUDDON, a Series of Sonnets: Vaudracour and Julia: and other Poems. To which is annexed, a Topographical Description of the Country of the Lakes, in the North of England. By William Wordsworth. London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster Row. 1820. Demy 8vo. Paper boards.

*Collation*.—Pp. viii, 321; Title, Dedication, Advertisement, and Contents, pp. i-viii. Poems and Notes, pp. 1-212; Description of the Lakes, pp. 213-321.

[In 1820 the four separate publications, "The Waggoner," etc.; "Thanksgiving Ode," etc.; "Peter Bell," etc.; and "The River Duddon," "Vaudracour and Julia," etc., were all bound up together with their separate title-pages, and issued under the title, *Poems by William Wordsworth*, making Vol. III. of the *Miscellaneous Poems*.]

## 19

THE MISCELLANEOUS POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. In four volumes. Vol. I. [Vol. II., Vol. III., Vol. IV.] London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster Row 1820. Fcap. 8vo. Paper boards.

*Collation*.—Vol. I.—pp. xlvii, 317; Title, Dedication, Advertisement, Preface, and Contents, pp. i-xlvii; Poems, pp. 1-317; after which follows a leaf of "Errata" for the four volumes. Vol. II.—pp. vii, 347; Title and Contents, pp. vii; Poems and Notes, pp. 1-347. Vol. III.—pp. xi, 338; Title and Contents, pp. i-xi; Poems, pp. 1-298; Essay, pp. 299-338. Vol. IV.—pp. viii, 331; Title and Contents, pp. i-viii; Poems and Notes, pp. 1-285; Preface (to "Lyrical Ballads") and Appendix (on "Poetic Diction"), pp. 325-331.

*Notes*.—To each volume there is an Engraving, two of which first appeared in the two volumes of *Poems* published in 1815, one in the quarto "White Doe" (1815), and one in "Peter Bell" (1819). The "Advertisement" states that this Edition contains the whole of the published poems (to date) of the Author, with the exception of "The Excursion," and that a few Sonnets "are now first published." This edition was republished at Boston, U.S.A., in 1824, in 4 vols. 12mo.

## 20

THE EXCURSION being a portion of The Recluse, A Poem. By William Wordsworth. Second Edition. London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1820. Demy 8vo. Paper boards.

*Collation*.—Pp. xx, 452; Titles, Dedication, Sonnet, Preface, and Summary of Contents, pp. i-xx; Text of Poem, pp. 1-423; Notes (including "Essay on Epitaphs"), pp. 425-452.

## 21

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT, 1820. By William Wordsworth. London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster Row, 1822. Demy 8vo. Paper boards.

*Collation.*—Pp. viii, 103; Titles, Dedication (a Sonnet), and Contents, pp. i-viii; Poems, pp. 1-79; Notes, pp. 81-103.

## 22

**ECCLESIASTICAL SKETCHES** By William Wordsworth. London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster-Row. 1822. Demy 8vo. Paper boards.

*Collation.*—Pp. x, 123; Titles and Advertisement, pp. i-vi; Contents, pp. vii-x; Poems (Sonnets), pp. 1-108; Notes, pp. 109-123.

*Notes.*—In after-editions Wordsworth added to this series of Sonnets, the one-volume (1845) edition containing 132. This, the first edition, contains 102.

## 23

**A DESCRIPTION OF THE SCENERY OF THE LAKES IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.** Third Edition (now first published separately), with additions, and illustrative remarks upon the Scenery of the Alps. By William Wordsworth. London: printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, Paternoster-Row. 1822. 12mo. Boards.

*Collation.*—Pp. iv, 156. Preceding title is a map of the Lake District; Title and Contents, pp. i-iv; Text pp. 1-156.

*Note.*—A portion of this book originally appeared as an Introduction to Wilkinson's *Select Views* [48] in *Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Lancashire*, published in 1810. In 1820 it was included in the volume, "The River Duddon: A Series of Sonnets," etc. (See No. 18.)

## 24

**THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.** In five volumes. Vol. I. [Vol. II.-V.] London: printed for Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, Paternoster-Row. 1827. Fcap. 8vo. Paper boards.

*Collation.*—Vol. I. pp. xlvii, 354; Title, Dedication (to Sir Geo. Beaumont), and Preface (to the two 8vo vols. of 1815), pp. i-xliv; Contents, pp. xlv-xlvii; Poems, pp. 1-354. Vol. II.—pp. viii, 391; Title

and Contents, pp. i-viii; Poems pp. 1-349; Notes, pp. 351-356; Essay, supplementary to the Preface, pp. 357-391. Vol. III.—pp. xvi, 455; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xvi; Poems, pp. 1-444; Notes, pp. 445-455. Vol. IV.—pp. vii, 397; Title and Contents, pp. i-vii, Poems, pp. 1-355; Preface (to "Lyrical Ballads"), pp. 357-389; Appendix (on "Poetic Diction"), pp. 391-397. Vol. V.—pp. xvii, 421; Titles, Dedictory Sonnet, Preface, and Contents, pp. i-xvii; Poem ("The Excursion"), pp. 1-391; Notes, including "Essay on Epitaphs," pp. 393-421. (Errata leaves are inserted after Contents in Vols. I., II., III., IV., and V.)

*Notes.*—"In these volumes will be found the whole of the Author's published poems, for the first time collected in a uniform edition, with several new pieces interspersed."—*Advertisement by the Author.*

This Edition was republished, in one volume, at Paris in 1828. See No. 25.

## 25

**THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.** Complete in one volume. (Woodcut of Harp, etc.) Paris published by A. and W. Galigani, No. 18, Rue Vivienne. 1828. Demy 8vo. Paper boards.

*Collation.*—Pp. xvi, 340; Titles, Advertisement, and Contents, pp. i-xii; Memoir, pp. xiii-xvi; Preface and Poems, 1-340.

*Notes.*—Facing title-page is an engraved portrait of Wordsworth by Wedgwood, after the painting by Carruthers. This Edition is a reprint of the 5 vol. London Edition published in 1827.

## 26

**SELECTIONS FROM THE POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, ESQ.,** chiefly for the use of schools and Young Persons. [Motto from *Rasselas*.] London: Edward Moxon, 64 New Bond Street, 1831. Crown 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xvi, 365; Title, Dedication, Preface, and Contents, pp. i-xvi; Text, pp. 1-365.

*Notes.*—This selection was republished in slightly different form in 1834. See No. 28. The selection was made by Joseph Hine.

## 27

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. A new Edition. In four volumes. Vol. I. [Vol. II., Vol. III., Vol. IV.] London: Printed for Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longman, Paternoster-Row. 1832. Fcap. 8vo. Paper boards.

*Collation.*—Vol. I.—pp. xlvii, 343; Titles, Dedication, Advertisement, and Preface, pp. i-xli; Contents, pp. xliii-xlvii, one leaf of Errata for the four volumes; Poems, pp. 1-310; Essay, supplementary to Preface, pp. 311-342; note, p. 343. Vol. II.—pp. xv, 377; Titles and Contents pp. i-xv; Poems, pp. 1-364; Notes, pp. 365-377. Vol. III.—pp. xi, 358; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xi; Poems (with notes), pp. 1-322; Preface (to "Lyrical Ballads"), pp. 323-352; Appendix (on "Poetic Diction"), pp. 353-358. Vol. IV.—pp. viii, 357; Titles and Contents, pp. i-viii; Poem ("The Excursion"), with Preface and Dedictory Sonnet, pp. 1-326; Notes, including the "Essay upon Epitaphs," pp. 327-357.

*Note.*—The "Advertisement" to this Edition is as follows:—"The contents of the last Edition in five volumes are compressed into the present of four, with some additional pieces reprinted from miscellaneous publications."

## 28

SELECTIONS FROM THE POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, ESQ., chiefly for the use of Schools and young persons. [Motto from *Rasselas*.] London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. MDCCCXXXIV. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xvi, 326.

*Note.*—This selection was made by Joseph Hine, and was first issued (in different form) in 1831. See No. 26.

## 29

YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS. By William Wordsworth. "Poets . . .

dwelt on earth To clothe whate'er the soul admires and loves With language and with numbers."—*Akenside*. London: printed for Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longman, Paternoster-Row; and Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1835. Fcap. 8vo. Paper Boards.

*Collation.*—Pp. xv, 349. Titles, Dedication, Advertisement, and Contents, pp. i-xv; Poems and Postscript, pp. 1-349.

## 30

A GUIDE THROUGH THE DISTRICT OF THE LAKES IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND, with a Description of the Scenery &c. For the use of Tourists and Residents. Fifth Edition, with considerable additions. By William Wordsworth, Kendal: published by Hudson and Nicholson; and in London by Longman & Co., Moxon, and Whittaker and Co., 1835. 12mo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xxiv, 139. Fronting Title is a "Map of the Lakes"; Title and Contents take up 2 leaves (unpaged); "Directions and information for the Tourist," pp. i-xxiv; "Description of the Scenery," pp. 1-112; "Excursions," pp. 112-134; "Itinerary of the Lakes," pp. 135-139.

## 31

YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS.

By William Wordsworth. "Poets . . . dwell on earth To clothe whate'er the soul admires and loves With language and with numbers."—*Akenside*. Second Edition. London: printed for Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longman, Paternoster Row; and Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1836. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xii, 323. Title, Dedication, Advertisement, and Contents, pp. i-xii; Poems and Postscript, pp. 1-323.

## 32

THE EXCURSION. A Poem. By William Wordsworth. A New Edition. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. MDCCCXXXVI. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xv, 374.

*Note.*—A page for page reprint of Vol. VI. of the 1836-37 Edition. Reprinted in 1841, 1844, and 1847.

## 33

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. A New Edition. In six volumes. Vol. I. (Vol. II.-VI.) London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street, MDCCCXXXVI. - MDCCCXXXVII. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Vol. I.—pp. xviii, 313; Titles, Dedication, Advertisement, Preface to the Edition of 1815, and Contents, pp. i-xlviii; Poems, pp. 1-310; Notes, pp. 311-313. Vol. II.—pp. viii, 351; Titles and Contents, pp. i-viii; Poems, pp. 1-302; Preface to "Lyrical Ballads," pp. 303-337; Appendix, pp. 339-345; Notes, pp. 347-351. Vol. III.—pp. xii, 355; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xii; Poems, pp. 1-313; Essay, supplementary to the Preface, pp. 315-352; Notes, pp. 353-355. Vol. IV.—pp. xi, 364; Title and Contents, pp. i-xi; Poems, pp. 1-310; Postscript, Notes, etc., pp. 311-364. Vol. V.—pp. xi, 412; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xi; Poems, pp. 1-345; Postscript, 1835, pp. 347-373; Notes, pp. 375-388; Index to the Poems, pp. 389-396; Index to the First Lines, pp. 397-412. Vol. VI.—pp. xvii, 374; Titles, pp. i-iv; Dedictory Sonnet, Preface, and Contents to "The Excursion," pp. v-xvi; Poem, pp. 1-343; Notes (including "Essay on Epitaphs"), pp. 345-372. ("Errata" leaves are inserted after Contents in Vols. I. and VI.)

*Notes.*—This Edition includes the poems published in 1835, in the Volume entitled, "Yarrow Revisited," etc. Vols. I. and II. are dated 1836; the remaining four 1837. The Edition was stereotyped, and reprinted in 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1846, 1849, etc., but there are a few slight variations of text, etc., from the 1836-37 Edition. The variations, however, do not warrant a separate description of their titles and contents. All the issues after 1841 include the Volume, "Poems of Early and Late Years," as Vol. VII., and after 1850 "The Prelude" was added, making an eighth volume.

The frontispiece to Vol. I. of this 1836-37 Edition is a steel engraved portrait of the Poet by Watt, from the painting by Pickersgill. It was repeated in the 1840, 1841, and following Editions.

(In 1837 an American reprint of the poetical works of Wordsworth was published, edited by Professor Reed. It contained the poems issued in London in 5 vols. in 1827, and the contents of the Volume, "Yarrow Revisited," etc., published in 1835. It was a Royal 8vo double-column edition, and had a portrait from a painting by W. Boxall. After the Poet's death Professor Reed published a revised and complete Edition, which included not only the whole of the poems published by Wordsworth in 1849-50, but "The Prelude," and one or two pieces which have never been included in any other collective Edition of his works.)

## 34

THE SONNETS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. Collected in one volume, with a few additional ones, now first published. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1838. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xi, 477; Title, Contents, etc., pp. i-xi; Text, pp. 1-448; Notes, pp. 449-477.

*Note.*—This collective Edition of the Sonnets was reprinted, with an Essay on the History of the English Sonnet, by the late Archbishop Trench, in 1884. See No. 62.

## 35

YARROW REVISITED; and Other Poems. By William Wordsworth. [Woodcut, Cupid with a Harp.] London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. MDCCCXXXIX. 18mo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xi, 249; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xi; Text, pp. 1-249.

*Note.*—This Pocket Edition of "Yarrow Revisited," etc., is the third separate issue of the Poem. It seems to have been intended as a supplementary volume to the four vol. Edition of 1832, as the sheets of it are all imprinted "Vol. V.," but I have no direct proof that it was ever so issued.

## 36

POEMS, CHIEFLY OF EARLY AND LATE YEARS; including *The Borderers*, a Tragedy. By William Wordsworth. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1842. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation*.—Pp. xii, 405; Title and Contents, pp. i-viii; Prelude ("In desultory walk," etc.), pp. ix-xi; Erratum, p. xii; Advertisement, pp. 1-4; Poems, pp. 5-397; Notes, pp. 399-405.

*Notes*.—In the Advertisement the Author states that about one-third of the Poem "Guilt and Sorrow" was published in the year 1798, under the title of "The Female Vagrant," and was written in 1794. This volume, with an additional title, was added to the collected edition in 1843, and formed Vol. VII.

## 37

SELECT PIECES FROM THE POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. London: James Burns 1843. Sq. 12mo.

*Collation*.—Pp. viii, 240.

*Note*.—I have not been able to ascertain the name of the compiler of this selection. The little volume is dedicated "to her Most Sacred Majesty, Victoria."

[About this date (1843) there was a selection from Wordsworth's Poems made by Henry Reed, and published by Leavitt and Co., New York.]

## 38

KENDAL AND WINDERMERE RAILWAY.

Two Letters, reprinted from the *Morning Post*. Revised, with additions. Kendal: printed by R. Branthwaite and Son [1844].

*Collation*.—Pp. 23; Title and Sonnet, pp. 1-3; Letters, pp. 5-23.

## 39

THE POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, D.C.L., Poet Laureate, etc. etc. A New Edition. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. MDCCCXLV. Royal 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation*.—Pp. xxiv, 619; Title, Motto ("If thou indeed derive thy light") and Contents, pp. i-xxiv; Poems, pp. 1-535;

Notes, pp. 537-566; Appendix, Prefaces, etc., pp. 567-608; Index to Poems and Index to first lines, pp. 609-619.

*Notes*.—This Edition was frequently republished; the Editions after 1850 or 1851 include "The Prelude," and the Edition of 1869 has "nine additional poems" dated 1846. The addition of "The Prelude" and "nine additional poems" increases the number of pages to 704. All copies contain an engraved portrait from the bust by Chantrey, and a Vignette Title-page containing a picture of Rydal Mount.

## 40

ODE, performed in the Senate-House, Cambridge, on the sixth of July, M.DCCC.XLVII. At the first commencement after the Installation of his Royal Highness the Prince Albert, Chancellor of the University. Cambridge: printed at the University Press. 1847. 4to. Paper wrapper.

*Collation*.—Pp. 8, including Title.

## 41

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, D.C.L., Poet Laureate, etc. etc. In six volumes. Vol. I. [Vol. II., Vol. III., Vol. IV., Vol. V., Vol. VI.] A new Edition. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. MDCCCXLIX. [—MDCCCL] 16mo. Cloth.

*Collation*.—Vol. I.—pp. x, 299; Titles, Motto ("If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven") and Contents, pp. i-x; Poems, pp. 1-297; Notes, 298-299. Vol. II.—pp. xii, 327; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xii; Poems, pp. 1-321; Notes, pp. 322-327. Vol. III.—pp. xiv, 271; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xiv; Poems, pp. 1-238; Notes, pp. 239-271. Vol. IV.—pp. xvi, 292; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xvi; Poems, pp. 1-272; Notes, pp. 273-292, and "additional note" on following leaf (unpagd). Vol. V.—pp. viii, 307; Titles and Contents, pp. i-viii; Poems, pp. 1-154; Notes, pp. 155-156; Appendix. Prefaces, etc., pp. 157-279; Index to Poems, pp. 281-290; Index to first lines, pp. 291-307. Vol. VI.—pp. vi, 301; Titles and Contents, pp. i-vi; Poem ("The

Excursion," with Dedicatory Sonnet and Preface), pp. 1-281; Notes, pp. 283-301.

*Note.*—Vols. I. and II. are dated 1849, and Vols. III.-VI., 1850. "The Excursion," forming the sixth volume of this Edition, was reprinted separately in 1851, 1853, and 1857.

[No. 41 is the last Edition issued during the poet's lifetime.]

## 42

THE PRELUDE, OR GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND; an Autobiographical Poem. By William Wordsworth. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1850. Demy 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. x, 374; Titles, Advertisement, and Contents, pp. i-x; Text, pp. 1-372; Notes, pp. 373-4.

## 43

THE PRELUDE, OR GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND; an Autobiographical Poem; By William Wordsworth. Second Edition. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1851. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. x, 304; Titles, Advertisement, and Contents, pp. i-x; Text, pp. 1-302; Notes, pp. 303-4.

*Note.*—This was issued uniform with the seven-volume Edition of the Poetical Works, and formed Vol. VIII.

[In 1854 Messrs. Little, Brown, and Co., of Boston, U.S.A., published an Edition of Wordsworth's Poetical Works in seven volumes, with a memoir (unsigned) by James Russell Lowell. This Edition was re-issued in 1880 in their series of "The British Poets." These, along with Professor Reed's Editions of 1837 and 1851, are the most satisfactory American Editions of the poems.]

## 44

SELECT PIECES FROM THE POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. London: Edward Moxon [1855]. Sq. 12mo.

*Collation.*—Pp. viii, 264.

## 45

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. In six volumes. Vol.

I. [Vols. II.-VI.] A new Edition. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street, 1857. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Vol. I.—pp. xii, 362; Titles, Advertisement, Motto, and Contents, pp. i-xii; Text, pp. 1-360; Notes, pp. 361-362. Vol. II.—pp. xii, 377; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xii; Text, pp. 1-370, Notes, pp. 371-377. Vol. III.—pp. xii, 368; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xii; Text, pp. 1-328; Notes, pp. 329-368. Vol. IV.—pp. xvi, 395; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xvi; Text, pp. 1-374; Notes, pp. 375-395. Vol. V.—pp. viii, 368; Titles and Contents, pp. i-viii; Text, pp. 1-366; Notes, pp. 367-368. Vol. VI.—pp. vi, 454; Titles and Contents, pp. i-vi; Text, pp. 1-304; Notes, pp. 305-322; Appendix, Prefaces, Indices, pp. 323-454.

*Notes.*—This Edition was reprinted in 1870 (and called "The Centenary Edition"), in 1881, and in 1882, on thick crown 8vo paper. In this Edition the Fenwick notes to the poems (notes dictated by the poet to Miss Fenwick) are first printed, and form the prefatory notes to the poems explained.

## 46

THE EARLIER POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. Corrected as in the latest Editions. With Preface, and Notes showing the text as it stood in 1815. By William Johnston. London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1857. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xxxvi, 435; Titles, Dedication, and Preface, pp. i-xxvi; Contents, xxvii-xxxvi; Text, pp. 1-435.

## 47

THE DESERTED COTTAGE By William Wordsworth. Illustrated with twenty-one designs by Birket Foster, J. Wolf, and John Gilbert, engraved by the Brothers Dalziel. London: George Routledge and Co., Farringdon Street. New York: 18 Beekman Street. 1859. Small 4to. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. 114.

*Note.*—Most of the illustrations to this volume were afterwards reproduced in the



selection from the poems edited by Rev. R. A. Willmott, and published by the same firm in the same year.

## 48

## POEMS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Selected and Edited by Robert Aris Willmott, Incumbent of Bear Wood. Illustrated with one hundred designs by Birket Foster, J. Wolf, and John Gilbert, Engraved by the Brothers Dalziel. London: George Routledge and Co., Farringdon Street. New York: 18, Beekman Street, MDCCCLIX. Small 4to. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xvi, 388; Frontispiece, Title, Preface, Contents, and List of Illustrations, pp. i-xvi; Poems, pp. 1-384; Notes, 385-388.

## 49

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE; OR, THE FATE OF THE NORTONS. By William Wordsworth. [With Illustrations by H. N. Humphreys and Birket Foster.] London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts. 1859. Small 4to.

*Collation.*—Pp. 165; Title, Introduction, Text, etc., pp. 1-156; Notes, pp. 157-165.

*Note.*—This illustrated Edition of "The White Doe" was re-issued in a different form, in 1867, by Bell and Daldy. See No. 53.

## 50

PASSAGES FROM "THE EXCURSION," by William Wordsworth, Illustrated with Etchings on Steel by Agnes Fraser. London: published by Paul and Dominic Colnaghi and Co., publishers to Her Majesty, 13 and 14 Pall Mall East, 1859. Oblong 4to. *Contains eleven plates.*

## 51

THE SELECT POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. Copyright Edition. In two volumes. Vol. I. [Vol. II.] Leipzig Bernhard Tauchnitz 1864.

*Collation.*—Vol. I.—pp. xii, 411. Vol. II.—pp. xvi, 400.

*Notes.*—This forms Vols. 707 and 708 of Tauchnitz's "Collection of British Authors." Though called "The Select Poetical Works," the selecting has been

done in a very haphazard sort of way. As an instance of the editor's discrimination I may mention that the immortal lines on "Tintern Abbey" are not included!

## 52

MOXON'S MINIATURE POETS. A Selection from the Works of William Wordsworth, Poet Laureate. Selected and arranged by Francis Turner Palgrave. London: Edward Moxon & Co., Dover Street. 1865. Sq. 12mo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xxviii, 279. A steel portrait of the Poet "from an original bust" faces title; Title and Preface, pp. i-xxi; Contents, pp. xxiii-xxviii; Text, pp. 1-279.

*Note.*—This selection was re-issued in 1869; and, recently, in a small pocket Edition.

## 53

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE; OR, THE FATE OF THE NORTONS. By William Wordsworth. [Woodcut of a Doe.] London: Bell and Daldy, 186 Fleet Street. 1867. Small 4to. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xvi, 170-128; Titles, List of Illustrations, and Introduction, pp. i-xvi; Dedictory Poem ("In trellised shed") and "White Doe," pp. 17-123; Notes, pp. 124-128.

*Notes.*—This Edition contains forty-two illustrations "designed by Birket Foster and H. N. Humphreys. Engraved by Henry N. Woods." It is a reprint, in a different form, of No. 49.

## 54

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. (The only complete cheap Edition.) Edited, with a critical Memoir, by William Michael Rossetti. Illustrated by artistic etchings by Edwin Edwards. London: E. Moxon, Son, & Co., Dover Street [1870]. Small 4to.

*Collation.*—Pp. xxiv, 568.

*Note.*—See Notes to No. 55.

## 55

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. [The only complete

cheap Edition.] Edited, with a critical Memoir, by William Michael Rossetti. Illustrated by Henry Dell. London: E. Moxon, Son, & Co., Dover Street. N.D. Post 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xxiv, 568; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xiv; Prefatory Notice, pp. xv-xxiv; Poems, pp. 1-497; Notes, pp. 499-534; Appendix, Prefaces, etc., pp. 535-568.

*Notes.*—There is an engraved portrait to this Edition. It is from one of the portraits of the poet by Miss Gillies. The engraving first appeared in Volume I. of *The New Spirit of the Age*, Edited by R. H. Horne. The date of the first publication of this Edition is not given, but it was 1870. It is a reprint, on smaller paper, of No. 54.

56

THE PROSE WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. For the first time collected, with additions from unpublished manuscripts. Edited, with Preface, Notes and Illustrations, by the Rev. Alexander B. Grosart, St. George's, Blackburn, Lancashire. In three volumes. Vol. I. Political and Ethical. [Vol. II. Æsthetical and Literary.] [Vol. III. Critical and Ethical.] London: Edward Moxon, Son, and Co., 1 Amen Corner, Paternoster Row. 1876. [*All rights reserved.*] Demy 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Vol. I.—pp. xxxviii, 360; Titles, Dedication ("To the Queen;" with poem by Wordsworth not previously published), and Preface, pp. i-xxxviii; Contents, one leaf; Text, pp. 1-356; Notes and Illustrations, pp. 357-360. Vol. II.—pp. iv, 347; Title and Contents, pp. i-iv; Text, pp. 1-341; Notes and Illustrations, pp. 343-347. Vol. III.—pp. xii, 516; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xii; Text, pp. 1-504; Notes and Illustrations, pp. 505-516.

*Note.*—There was also a private issue of this Edition printed on hand-made paper, with portrait, facsimiles, and autotype plates, of which there were only 112 copies.

57

THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT as inter-

preted in the Poems of Wordsworth By William Knight Professor of Moral Philosophy and Political Economy in the University of St. Andrews Edinburgh David Douglas 1878. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xxiv, 248; Titles, Contents, and Preface, pp. i-xxiv; Text, pp. 1-248.

*Notes.*—This little book is an attempt to explain Wordsworth's numerous allusions, in his poems, to localities in the English Lake District. Nearly all the poems, or portions of poems, containing such allusions, are here given, with a mass of topographical detail. It may not inappropriately be included in this Bibliography, as it is a good collection of Wordsworth's pieces associated with the District.

58

POEMS OF WORDSWORTH chosen and edited by Matthew Arnold [Engraved portrait by C. H. Jeens, after the "Wordsworth upon Helvellyn" portrait by Haydon.] London Macmillan and Co., 1879. 18mo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xxxi, 325; Fly leaf (with motto), Title, and Preface, pp. i-xxvi; Contents, xxvii-xxxi; Poems, pp. 1-317; Index of first lines, pp. 319-325.

*Notes.*—In this admirable selection Mr. Arnold arranges the poems under the following headings:—Poems of Ballad Form; Narrative Poems; Lyrical Poems; Poems akin to the Antique, and Odes; Sonnets; Reflective and Elegiac Poems. It has been several times reprinted, and is still in print. There was a large paper Edition, of which a limited number were printed.

59

THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH Edited by William Knight, LL.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy, St Andrews. [Woodcut, The Small Celandine.] Volume First. [Volume Second—Volume Eighth.] Edinburgh: William Paterson, MDCCCLXXXII. [MDCCCLXXXII-MDCCCLXXXVI.] 8 vols. Demy 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Volume First—pp. lxxxiii, 313; Titles, Dedication, Contents, Note, and Preface, pp. i-l; Chronological Order of the Poems, pp. li-lxxxiii; Text, pp. 1-279; Appendix (containing three early productions of the Poet), pp. 281-313. Volume Second—pp. viii, 396; Titles and Contents, pp. i-viii; Text, pp. 1-389; Appendix, pp. 391-396. Volume Third—pp. vii, 424; Titles and Contents, pp. i-vii; Text, pp. 1-403; Appendix, pp. 405-424. Volume Fourth—pp. viii, 387; Titles and Contents, pp. i-viii; Text (of Poems), pp. 1-271; Appendix (comprising the Author's Prefaces, Dedication, Appendix, Essay, and Postscript), pp. 272-387. Volume Fifth—pp. viii, 434; Titles, Prefatory Note, and Contents, pp. i-viii; Text (of "The Excursion"), pp. 1-394; Notes (including the "Essay upon Epitaphs") pp. 395-412; Appendix (of Notes by the Editor), pp. 413-434. Volume Sixth—pp. xii, 379; Titles, Preface, and Contents, pp. i-xii; Text, pp. 1-353; Appendix (of Editor's Notes), pp. 355-379. Volume Seventh—pp. xvi, 401; Titles and Contents, pp. i-xvi; Text, pp. 1-400; Appendix (Note by Editor), p. 401. Volume Eighth—pp. xi, 435; Titles, Prefatory Note, and Contents, pp. i-xi; Text (of Poems), pp. 1-178; Prose Fragments (comprising "Guide to the Lakes" and "Letters on the Kendal and Windermere Railway"), pp. 179-321; "List of Wordsworth's Poems, arranged in Chronological Order," pp. 323-387; Appendix (of Editor's Notes), pp. 389-391; Index to the Poems, pp. 393-414; Index to First Lines, pp. 415-435. (Seven etchings are given as frontispieces to Vols. I.-VII.)

*Notes.*—This splendid Library Edition is an adequate monument of the great Poet's genius. There is probably no other man who could have so exhaustively edited the Poems as Professor Knight has done. The special features of this Edition are as follow:—The Poems are arranged in chronological order of composition; all the changes of text, in the successive Editions of the Poems, are given in footnotes, with the exact dates of these changes; several new readings, or suggested changes of text, which exist in MS., and were written by the Poet on the margins of a copy of

the Edition of 1836-37, kept at Rydal Mount and now in the possession of Lord Coleridge, are added; all the Fenwick Notes (dictated by Wordsworth to Miss Fenwick) to the Poems, giving the Poet's account of the circumstances under which his Poems were composed, are printed as Prefatory Notes to the Poems explained; Topographical Notes to the Poems, containing allusions to localities in the English Lake District and elsewhere, are given; several Poems and Fragments, hitherto unpublished, are printed; a Bibliography of the Poems, and the successive Editions published in England and America, from 1793 to 1850, is added; [a Bibliography of Critical Articles on the Poet's Works will be given in one of the forthcoming volumes of the *Life of Wordsworth*, by Professor Knight, which will be published as supplementary to the present Edition of his *Poetical Works*]; Etchings of localities associated with the Poet are given as frontispieces to Vols. I., II., III., IV., V., VI., and VII. The text adopted for this Edition is Wordsworth's final text of 1849-50. In addition to the ordinary Demy 8vo Edition there was printed a Large Paper Edition (of 140 copies) with proofs of the Etchings on China Paper and Holland Paper, size, Imperial 8vo; and a Largest Paper Edition (of 25 copies) on the finest Laid Paper, with the Etchings (threefold) on China, India, and Dutch Paper, size, Super-imperial 8vo.

60

**SELECTIONS FROM WORDSWORTH.** Edited, with an Introductory Memoir, by J. S. Fletcher. London: Alex. Gardner. 12 Paternoster Row, and Paisley. MDCCCLXXXIII. Fcap. 8vo. Parchment.

*Collation.*—Pp. xii, 13-37, 1-295; Fly Leaf contains a mounted Engraving of Rydal Mount; Titles, Motto (from Matthew Arnold's *Memorial Verses*), and Contents, pp. i-xii; Introductory Memoir, pp. 13-37; Poems, pp. 1-295.

*Notes.*—In 1885 (?) a number of copies were issued bearing "J. S. Fletcher and

Co." on title-page as the publishers. The volume is very prettily printed on hand-made paper.

61

**THE RIVER DUDDON** A Series of Sonnets By William Wordsworth With ten Etchings by R. S. Chattock The Fine Art Society 148 New Bond Street, London 1884. Folio. Cloth.

The leaves of this volume are unpagged; preceding each etching is a leaf giving title of the picture, a quotation from one of the sonnets, and a prose description.

62

**THE SONNETS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH** Collected in one volume with an Essay on The History of the English Sonnet by Richard Chenevix Trench, D.D., Archbishop of Dublin Chancellor of the Order of St. Patrick [Mounted Etching of Rydal Water.] London Suttaby and Co., Amen Corner MDCCCLXXXIV. Crown 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xlv, 246; Titles, Publishers' Note, and History of the Sonnet, pp. i-xxxvi; Advertisement and Contents, pp. xxxvii-xlv; Sonnets, pp. 1-246.

*Note.*—This volume is a reprint—with the addition of "The History of the English Sonnet"—of Wordsworth's own collected Edition of Sonnets, published in 1838. See No. 34.

63

**THE POETICAL WORKS OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH**, With a Prefatory Notice, Biographical and Critical. By Andrew James Symington. London: Walter Scott, 14 Paternoster Square, and Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1885. 16mo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. vi, 7-285; Title and Contents, pp. i-vi; Inscription (on p. 7); Prefatory Notice, pp. 9-46; Poems, pp. 47-285.

*Notes.*—This (which is one of the vols. of "The Canterbury Poets") is only a

selection, though described on the title as "The Poetical Works." The Prefatory Memoir and Criticism is sympathetically written, and the poems chosen are fairly representative.

64

**THROUGH THE WORDSWORTH COUNTRY.** By Harry Goodwin and Professor Knight. [Publishers' ornament.] London: Swan Sonnenschein, Lowrey & Co., Paternoster Square. 1887. Imperial 8vo. Cloth.

*Collation.*—Pp. xix, 268; Titles, Contents, and Preface, pp. i-xix; Text, pp. 1-268.

*Notes.*—This is a volume containing fifty-five engravings from drawings by Harry Goodwin of scenes in the English Lake District associated with Wordsworth, with all the poems, or portions of poems, referring to the places. The volume is edited and prefaced, with introductions to the poems and pictures, by Professor Knight. There is an emblematic design on cover, which contains title as follows:—*Pictures by Harry Goodwin. Text by William Knight. THROUGH THE WORDSWORTH COUNTRY.*

65

**SELECTIONS FROM WORDSWORTH.** By William Knight and other Members of the Wordsworth Society. With Preface and Notes. [Publishers' Motto ornament.] London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co., 1 Paternoster Square. MDCCCLXXXVIII. Large Crown 8vo. In two bindings, parchment and vellum.

*Collation.*—Pp. xxiv, 309; Titles and Preface, pp. i-xv; Contents, pp. xvii-xxiv; Poems, pp. 1-304; Notes, pp. 305-309.

*Notes.*—The poems are arranged in chronological order of composition, and there is an admirable etched portrait of the poet—"from a miniature by Margaret Gillies in the possession of Sir Henry Doulton"—given as frontispiece. It is the intention of the publishers to issue this selection in a smaller and cheaper form.

66

THE RECLUSE By William Wordsworth  
London Macmillan and Co. And  
New York 1888

*Collation.*—Pp. vi, 60; Titles and Preface, i-vi; Text, pp. 1-60.

*Note.*—In the prefatory advertisement to

the First Edition of the Prelude, 1850, it is stated that that poem was designed to be introductory to the Recluse, and that the Recluse, if completed, would have consisted of three parts. The second part is "The Excursion." The third part was only planned. The first book of the first part was left in manuscript by Wordsworth. It is now (1888) published for the first time *in extenso*.

# LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES OF WORDSWORTH AND BEST CRITICAL ARTICLES ON HIS WRITINGS

[PREFATORY NOTE.—The following List of Biographies and Critical Essays on Wordsworth is, as nearly as can be ascertained, arranged in Chronological Order, except in cases where more than one article by the same writer is enumerated, in which cases they are all put together. Biographies, and articles partly biographical, are marked with an \*]

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THE END











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